



Mexico

ITS SOCIAL

EVOLUTION

Balleseá - Editor

3 vols.

1550-



Mexico

ITS SOCIAL EVOLUTION



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ITS SOCIAL EVOLUTION

SYNTHESIS OF THE POLITICAL HISTORY, ADMINISTRATION, MILITARY ORGANISATION AND ECONOMICAL STATE
OF THE MEXICAN CONFEDERATION, ITS ADVANCEMENTS IN THE INTELLECTUAL SPHERE, ITS TERRITORIAL STRUCTURE,
GROWTH OF ITS POPULATION, MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL, ITS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIELDS
OF INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, MINING, COMMERCE, ETC., ETC.

MONUMENTAL INVENTORY
SUMMING UP IN MASTERLY EXPOSITIONS THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE NATION
IN THE XIX CENTURY

WRITTEN BY

AUGUSTIN ARAGÓN, ENGINEER.
GILBERT CRESPO Y MARTÍNEZ, ENGINEER.
EZEKIEL A. CHÁVEZ, LICENTIATE.
MICHAEL S. MACEDO, LICENTIATE.
PAUL MACEDO, LICENTIATE.
EMILIUS PARDO (Jr.), LICENTIATE.

PORPHYRIUS PARRA, M. D.
JANUARIUS RAIGOSA, LICENTIATE.
GENERAL BERNARD REYES.
EMMANUEL SÁNCHEZ MÁRMOL, LICENTIATE.
JUSTUS SIERRA, MAGISTRATE.
EDWARD ZÁRATE, LICENTIATE.

AND JULIUS ZÁRATE, MAGISTRATE.

LITERARY EDITOR:

LICENTIATE JUSTUS SIERRA

ARTISTIC EDITOR:

JAMES BALLESCA

Translated into English by G. SENTINÓN

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VOL. I.—PART FIRST

Title-page

PART FIRST



TO THE READER

The title we have chosen for our work might be objected to as presumptuous, if we had been able to find another more comprehensive and more telling at the same time. It does not mean we intend to write a treatise on Mexican Sociology in the strictly scientific bearing of the word; we do not venture to assume that precise inferences may be drawn from our studies and that the aggregate of antecedent phenomena we are going to present in an organised series will allow us to describe the consequent phenomena with certainty and accuracy.

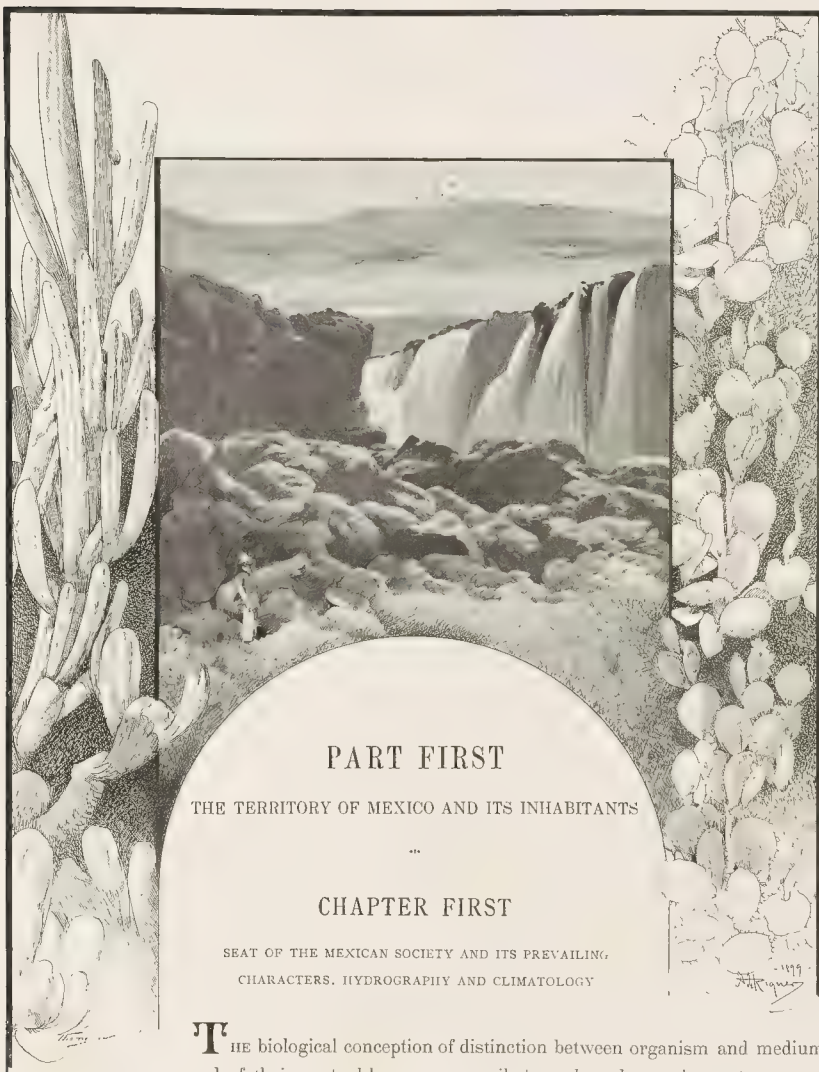
Neither has Sociology being a nascent science as yet been able to approach its ideal or reach definitively something more than its statute law and its method nor do we hold all the elements to determine with entire exactness the concurring factors of our evolution.

We do not aim at so much; we only want to present, before all those who within and beyond our Republic, from interest, sympathy or curiosity care for our future, the clear tokens of our growth which is the chief part of every organic evolution. With the firm purpose to make no misstatements we wish to show in broad but characteristic outlines, how this society after a slow and painful gestation severed from the colonial organism and was, by a supreme act of its will, and how after an irregular and tumultuous existence it has succeeded in normalising a vital labor of assimilation of the substantial elements of general civilisation without losing the distinctive features of its own personality.

The distribution we have adopted for this work is perhaps not the most strictly logical one, but it is the most tallying with our habitual way to consider the combined action of Society and State. Looking at the manifold manifestations of the transformation that is going on in this Country we behold an EVOLUTION, a stepping forward from an inferior state to a superior one; we call it SOCIAL because it comprises the chief manifestations of activity of the Mexican group.

We expect the reader to take into consideration our endeavours and good will in his judgment of a labour which necessarily must turn out imperfect because in its execution two unavoidable deficiencies are concurring, that of the informations we are able to gather for our statements and that of our personal aptitudes: luckily both shortcomings may be made up for to a certain extent by a profound worship for our Country; it is this feeling which emboldens us to set to work without misgivings.

THE AUTHORS.



THE biological conception of distinction between organism and medium and of their mutual harmony prevails to such a degree in contemporary studies about the present Societies that it is considered impossible to understand the evolution of an organism, be it an individual or a collective one, from the point of view of modern philosophy, without a knowledge of the outer world that is, or was, surrounding it. The organism is, indeed, observed struggling to procure from the surrounding medium the materials it needs and to assimilate them at once combining them by virtue of its vital spontaneousness. Thus there must necessarily exist a complete harmony between medium and organism; otherwise this would disappear unavoidably.

Although the influence of the vital and material medium has been overstated by some writers, the documents gained by its study are indispensable to determine any single case of concrete sociology. How, indeed, should we be able to explain, without those documents, the profound divisions which race, that is to say the modifications transmitted by inheritance, stamps in the human species? Why so much appetite and at the same time so much affection in the negro? Why so much activity in the yellow race and so much intelligence in the white? How is it to be explained that certain peoples live in downright theocracy and others cannot stand it? Why did the priests reign in Thebes and Babylon and the warriors in Pekin, the city of the lettered, in Athens, the city of the philosophers and in Rome that was the city of the Popes when Byzantium was that of the Caesars? What roll or influence must we allow in these contrasts to the seat of the societies or what is the same, to their mountains, rivers, winds, grounds and in general to the nature of each country, we mean to say that vegetable and animal providence which constitutes the first cradle of all civilisation?

Thus, the programme of historical geography is this. Having stated the first movements, the primitive impulses, it must explain also the political combinations and decompositions and on the ground of the cities or the theatres of the great events, it must take up by means of descriptions, often very detailed ones, many things an explorer of nature will be apt to overlook, bestowing on a gorge or defile like Thermopylae, an elbow of the Tiber, an islet in the Seine, etc., more importance than ever was given in any epoch to the wildest panoramas and the grandest sights described in physical Geography. It is by such a preparation that historical investigation availing itself of the study of laws, customs, habits, creeds, men and events can rise to the general notion of mankind.

This programme, alluring and tempting as it is, requires for its execution conditions of space and time we lack and we have sketched it only to point out how important it is for the student of the evolution of a nation to have a knowledge of the physical agents at work in its building up.

The progress of a nation is dependent upon an aggregate of circumstances either constant or varying which must be studied in order to gauge their influence and not to apply indiscriminately as a standard what is taught by the written history of neighbouring or analogous nations. A work like the present one, concerning Mexico and its evolution, in order to be complete, must include facts of distinct kind from the climate and other physical conditions up to what is a product of human activity and what is an effect of outer influences, all of them contributing to set the character of a people.

Before studying the dynamical state of a society or its progress we must know its statical conditions or the elements which are the cause or antecedent of its evolution. The succession of events of a country gives us a sufficient explanation of their course, when we know also the theatre where they happened and the persons who brought them about. Therefore we are going to describe the stage of the Mexican Society and the actors who played a part in the scenes.

Considering what we have said thus far the reader will not wonder at our beginning the study of our society with a description of the region of the planet occupied by it, being aware that the action of man is limited in part by the conditions of that region. Sociology and biology agree to furnish plenty of proofs for our assertion. Man must submit to the circumstances

VOL. I. — PART FIRST

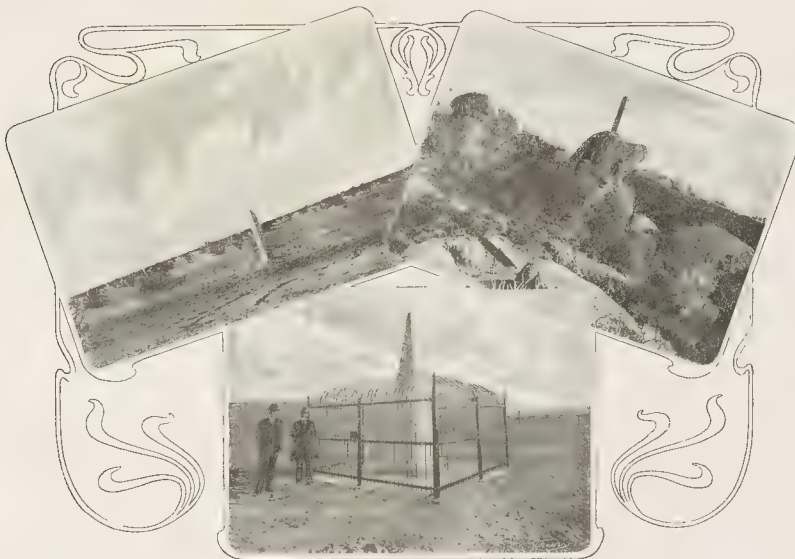
The Mexican territory and its inhabitants

Francis Diaz Covarrubias



that surround him, to the cosmological and biological fatalities that beset him; these impose or mark the way he must pursue in his life and as they are not all alike, social life is not identical or fatally uniform. The greater intelligence of man in the scale of animals that forms the zoological series brings on a modification from his side in the intensity of the phenomena which is not accessible to the other animal kinds. The Laplander on his frozen soil and the Congoman on his scorching one seek and find the mode of satisfying their human needs and this same amplitude of action for life, in our species, brings about the diversity of conditions by the diversity of means employed in the satisfaction of the distinct human needs.

Great geographical surveys, subdivided in geodesical and topographical ones, are the



Monuments of the frontier line with the United States of North America

only sure base to know a country. In Mexico it has not yet been possible to effectuate them on more than a small scale, being conspicuous among the first the very remarkable ones achieved by the most learned and distinguished astronomer, mathematician and geodesist Engineer Mr. Francis Díaz Covarrubias. The execution of such surveys requires spending large sums which the State is not in a condition to afford. This lack of such studies from the part of our own country obliges us to avail ourselves, for the description of the Mexican territory, of the data gathered by the most eminent of national and foreign explorers.

Mexico is situated at the South of the United States of America between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and begins the Isthmian region of the North part of the New Continent, a region that stretches to S.E. forming a series of Isthmuses, every following narrower than the foregoing, which constitute Central America. Of this Isthmian portion of the Columbian world Mexico occupies the Northern part. The general shape of the territory presents in its

outline the well-marked curvature that circumscribes the Gulf of Mexico; in its breadth following the parallels it grows gradually narrower towards S.E., bifurcating, after forming the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in two branches, one going on to Central America and the other bending towards the Caribbean Sea forming the peninsula of Yucatan. The peninsula of Lower California is a narrow tongue of land running parallel to the West coast of Mexico and presenting several angulations.

The general geographical structure of Mexico is dominated by a central table land generally sloping towards N. and N.E., and comprised between two mountain chains that are separated from the Oceans by narrow borders of land which become more and more contracted as they advance southward. These two chains which join in the southern part of the country, considered in their totality rise above the surface of the planet under the shape of the letter V opening its branches more and more as latitude becomes more boreal and entering even into the Anglo-american territory where the Western one, splitting in two, is known under the names of Rocky Mountains in the E. and Sierra Nevada in the W. Looking at these mountain chains Southward from their jointure into one, we see them stretch out through Central America having at its Oriental skirt the low land of Yucatan scarcely rising to a mean elevation of from 30 to 40 meters above the level of the Atlantic.

The central plateau or table land of Anáhuac with an estimated, not measured, surface of 660.000 square kilometers and a mean altitude of 1.700 meters extends without interruption from the valley of Toluca as far as Texas and New Mexico into the nation that neighbors us on the N. According to our statement that the table land is sloping from S. to N. it is in the S. we find its highest elevation of 2.600 meters and in the N. its lowest of 800 meters. This large plateau constitutes a first rate and most remarkable geographical individuality, sufficient to characterise admirably the Mexican territory and being itself made up by other geographical units of inferior order again subdivided into smaller ones; its ramifications towards both Oceans follow the solutions of continuity between the bordering chains, thus affording communication with the low grounds that surround the slopes and favor the outlet of the waters of the largest part of the table land towards both seas remaining as a shut up basin that which lies in the central part of the Plateau at the site of the depression denominated «Bolsón de Mapimí.»

The Anáhuac table land being the southern prolongation of the central depression of the American Continent in its northern portion presents all the characters of that great depression. While we note in the North that the depression grows more and more marked and acquires a wider range, in the South, on the contrary, the plains rise gradually, their amplitude diminishing along with the parallels. The general inclination of the Plateau obey the law of the general elevation of the bulk of the Continent.

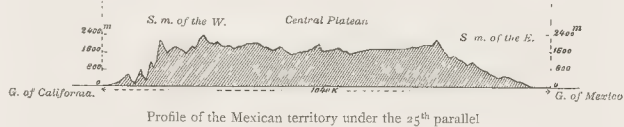
The seat of the Mexican people presents an uneven, most accidented soil interrupted by numerous high mountains and shows the general configuration of a giant truncated quadrangular pyramid whose eastern, western and southern sides rise from the Ocean to more than 2.000 meters to form the fore said table land.

The mountain chain designated by Baron Humboldt with the name of «Mexican Andes» is but the Northamerican prolongation of the gigantic cordillera which like an immense backbone runs through South America forming in Mexico the western range whose general

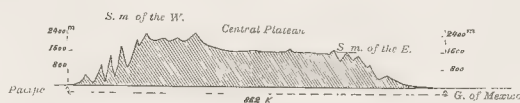
direction is that of the Pacific coast line. The Andes which at some sites have for pedestals table lands of a very considerable elevation above the sea like the Peruvian plateau, at other spots start from low lands becoming narrower or falling off to a considerable degree and forming remarkable gaps in their configuration or general aspect. The most important of these depressions corresponds to the multiple isthmian region of Central America; as for the gaps, they abound in Mexico, as the Mexican Cordilleras lose somewhat of their roughness only at the isthmus of Tehuantepec.

In the central part of the State of Oaxaca, in the knot of Zempoaltepec, is the starting point of the bifurcation of the Andes, one of the branches, Sierra Madre Oriental, running almost parallel to the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, whilst the other, Sierra Madre Occidental, as we stated above, follows the coast line of the Pacific. Each of these principal ranges splits into numerous and varied links bestrewn the country with mountains, hills and highlands that form more or less extensive and bewitching valleys like those of Mexico, Puebla and Toluca. A careful geographical and geological study of these seemingly detached, unrelated, scattered ridges reveals us their linking and mutual dependency, often apparent, visible, manifest, sometimes hardly perceivable, but always distinct enough to show the connection of all these elements of the relief of the Mexican territory.

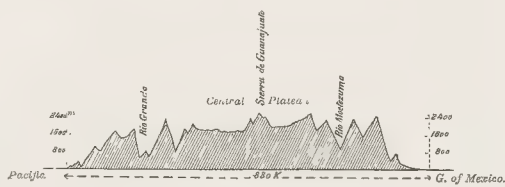
In order to give a clear idea of the situation, dimensions and geographical importance of the table land of Anáhuac and of the general relief of the country we present four profiles of the Mexican territory corresponding respectively to the 19th, 21st, 23^d and 25th parallels. They have been drawn by the competent Mexican geologists Mr. Joseph G. Aguilera and Mr. Ezekiel Ordóñez with the elements they had procured in their numerous geological excursions. In these profiles or geographical cuts which are but contour sketches of the altitude of the territory above the level of the Ocean following a given parallel of latitude, we may appreciate *de visu* the absolute height of the said plateau and its relations with the two mountain chains that circumscribe it on the E. and on the W. and we may judge also of the relative importance to be granted to the relief of each of the chains.



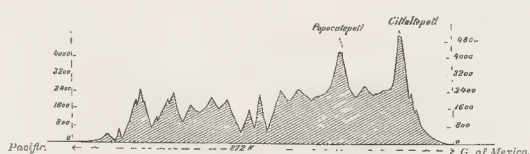
Profile of the Mexican territory under the 25th parallel



Profile of the Mexican territory under the 23^d parallel



Profile of the Mexican territory under the 21st parallel



Profile of the Mexican territory under the 19th parallel

A mere look at these profiles makes us aware that the most northern one, that of the 25th parallel reveals the least absolute height, less elevation and less subdivision in the Sierras and therefore more width in the Plateau. The profile of parallel 23^d shows us the maximum of height and breadth of the Sierra Madre of the West or of the Pacific and we see the Plateau with a generally uniform altitude. The profile of parallel 21st presents us the Plateau divided by the Sierra of Guanajuato; and, finally, the most southern profile shows the most elevated region of the Table land and the most rugged part of the Sierra of the Pacific where there are to be found the deep rents corresponding to the passes of the waters that form the basins



Ancient view of the port of Veracruz from the Castle of Utda (Gulf of Mexico)

(From a photograph by Briquet.)

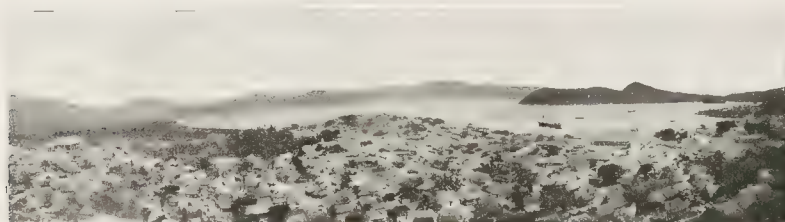
of the Great Ocean; at the E., in the mountainous agglomeration we find the Plateau remarkably narrowed.

The Mexican territory exhibits an extensive shore on both the Atlantic and the Pacific with bad ports in the former and magnific bays in the latter Ocean.

The total surface of the territory is estimated to be about two millions of square kilometers including the islands valued four thousand.

From the combined circumstances of low latitude, Mexico being situated between 14° 30' 42" and 32° 42', and high elevation it results that on the soil of the Republic all climates are to be found and the country is capable of producing all the fruits of the torrid and temperate zones. As rich and varied as the flora is, the fauna too displays itself on the immense extent of the territory. Likewise the configuration of the ground determines the lack of large

fluvial ways and renders difficult the construction of land roads. A mountainous soil of high elevation above the level of the sea, scanty of waters and whose scarce rivers rush down



Panorama of town and port of Acapulco (Pacific)

swiftly from their high sources, unavoidably or fatally offer unsurmountable difficulties to inland navigation and serious obstacles to the construction of roads and canals. On the declivitous soil of Mexico the water courses are generally torrents, abundant only in the rainy



Panorama of town and port of Mazatlán (Pacific)

season and perhaps more destructive than beneficial for agriculture; the only benefit obtainable from them is the utilisation of the force they generate by their precipitate descent and which already has begun to be turned to profit in a suitable manner.

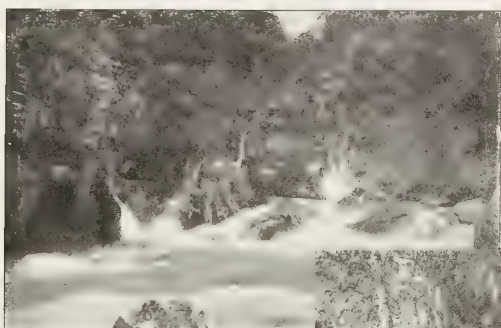
The problem of the utilisation of the waters considered from the economical stand point

has met with the full attention of the Mexican Government in the last ten years. Its importance is self evident being actually and decisively related with agricultural production, manufacturing work and conveyance trade. It is obvious at once that a study of the waters at the same time as it tends to prevent inundations may bestow on agriculture a great furtherance of production, on manufacturing moving power and on canals food for traffic. The enormous quantity of fertilising matter which the river Nazas (belonging to the close basin of the Bolsón de Mapimi) conveys year by year being turned to account has already bestowed on Mexico an enormous amount of agricultural wealth.

The largest rivers of Mexico, such as the Bravo, the Pánuco, the Coatzacoalcos, the

Mexcala a.s.o. are hardly navigable for vessels of little draught at a few kilometers off their mouths.

The vast plain formed by river sediments in the State of Tabasco determines in the same the formation of two extensive fluvial systems, that of the river Grijalva

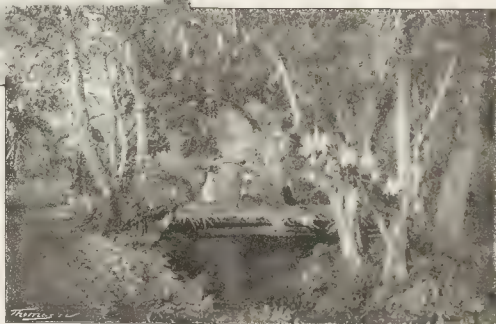


Temperate region Neighbourhood of Orizaba

and that of the river Usumacinta which run in parallel direction towards the Gulf and represent the only riches of the country on the side of inland navigation.

On the table land of Anáhuac, especially toward the N., not only sources are scarce, but as a forcible antecedent so is rainfall and in

consequence thereof drought is utterly prevailing; notwithstanding the ground when watered at the cost of most expensive irrigation works, yields valuable products. Whole districts may be travelled through without meeting one single brook, without finding one sole tree, beholding everywhere the sad spectacle of dead nature, to such a degree that the spots which for their vegetation deserve the name of true flower gardens in the Mexican steppes stand out like striking moles on a pallid skin. On the Mexican coasts vegetation is exuberant and luxuriant and at some places of the table land it shows itself equally generous, but there is a greater abundance of rocky and arid grounds where the soil is quite barren either on account of the crags or of the volcanic nature of the ground or of the washes produced by the torrent waters; these lands cannot be rendered productive even by a most careful cultivation. In the part of the Republic where, on account of the greater amplitude of the central plateau, open and expanded



Warm region (State of Veracruz)

(From a photograph by Bréquet)

landscapes claim our admiration, the soil is barren and in the part where it is not the valleys are always circumscribed by mountain frames revealing an uneven soil unfit for great agricultural labours.

The general configuration of the Mexican territory gives us a clear explanation why on the Anáhuac plateau rainfall is so scanty. All the moist winds that blow from the Pacific or the Atlantic towards Mexico before reaching the plateau after their ascent along the eastern slope of the Gulf range and the western of the Pacific range, lose their moisture on their way up the immense grades which like giants' stairs lead to the borders of the plateau and when



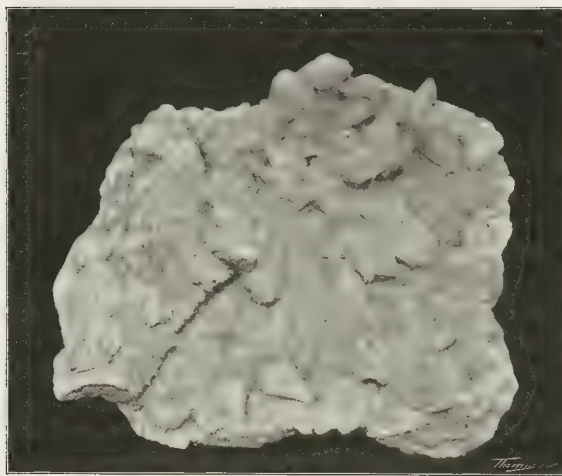
Waterfall of Juanacatlán (State of Jalisco)

crossing the mountains are deprived of all their dampness or nearly so and thus rendered unfavorable for an abundant precipitation. An idea of the distance in height those winds have to travel is easily formed by merely considering that the Mexican railway starting from Veracruz and ascending from the Ocean to the Table land rises to a height of 2,500 meters with a longitudinal deployment of 270 kilometers. When the winds proceeding from the Atlantic and hitting the lower part of the Gulf range, do not meet, at their arrival on the plateau, cold currents obliging them to yield their damps, they will continue their westward march and discharge their moisture on the eastern part of the Pacific range. When by the geodetical survey already begun in Mexico the directions and respective heights of our two great mountain ranges will be fixed and when by the creation of meteorological stations on these same ranges it will be possible to determine the regime of the winds that from the

Atlantic and Pacific blow towards Mexico, then we shall be able to foretell the conditions that obtain in the distribution of the meteoric water on the extensive Mexican plateau. In general terms it may be said that the rains coming from the sea water copiously the peripheral part of the country and more abundantly that of the Gulf, but do not reach the centre; they impart their creative power to the shores but they stop before the mountain ranges which bar their way to the vast table land of Anáhuac.

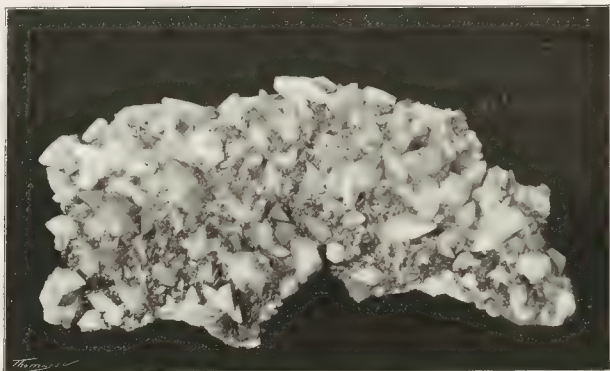
On the geographical position and the conditions of the soil the climate of a coun-

try is dependent as a consequence thereof. The temperature of Mexico in general is temperate and in our country the same thing is to be noted as in other parts of America, to wit: at equal latitude temperature is lower in our territory than in corresponding tracts of the Old Continent.



Calc-spar (State of Guanajuato)

the efforts of man. The notion of natural law or invariable relation between two phenomena leads as it were by the hand to the idea of a preestablished immutable order equivalent to what the ancients called *Destiny* or *Fate*. However the notion of law ought not to hinder our



Calc-spar (State of Guanajuato)

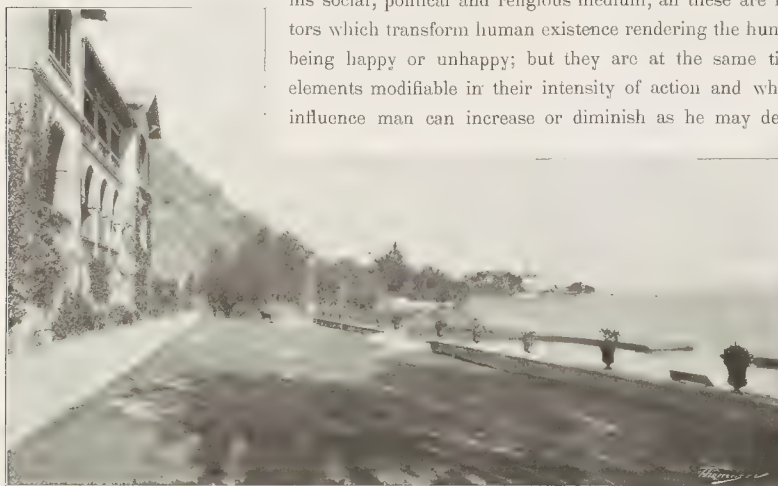
The cause of this difference sought for in Mexico is found to lie in its greater altitude above sea level. Of course, there are regions in this territory whose temperature is far from corresponding to the general designative with which we meant to indicate that of the country on the whole.

The influence of climate on the evolution of social organism has been overstated by certain writers to an extent beyond all verisimilitude, quite overlooking the fact that this influence may be largely counteracted by

activity; this too is submitted to the natural laws and man is led spontaneously to act. The idea of order, of regularity in the phenomena, represents no more than a part or an aspect of the reality of things and the image in order to be complete must be associated with the notion stating that natural phenomena although submitted to invariable relations are nevertheless susceptible of modification within certain limits and therefore can satisfy our spontaneous necessity of action. Briefly stated: *the idea of law must be completed with that of modifiability which is but the idea of progress in the language of sociology.*

Certainly all things contribute to modify man: the climate in which he lives, the conditions of the soil on which he has settled, the habits inherited from his forefathers, his relations with his fellow creatures, the presence or absence of more or less enlightened geniuses in

his social, political and religious medium, all these are factors which transform human existence rendering the human being happy or unhappy; but they are at the same time elements modifiable in their intensity of action and whose influence man can increase or diminish as he may deem



Lake of Chapala

useful for his existence. Where climate is inclement and hard, the soil barren and therefore life difficult, the body infirm and intelligence mediocre, we can mitigate climatic roughness, improve life, strengthen the body and educate the mind. This is what has been done rather empirically in all nations and ages, and what has been performed by chance can be achieved to-day with a conscience of power or dominion over the natural phenomena founded on our knowledge of the aim we pursue and of the means we must employ to attain it.

The same people on the same soil can be either savage or civilised and what climate engenders is the variety of efforts to attain the same aim. The ground is worth what the man is worth who cultivates it. The table land of Anáhuac unproductive in appearance, speaking of corn only, is the granary of many districts of the coast.

A consequence of the high elevation of the Central plateau of Mexico is the low atmospheric pressure thereon. In the town of Mexico the pressure is but three fourths of what it is at sea level and this climatic element diversely interpreted by climatologists is a starting point for observations to be made regarding life on high lands.

The geographical situation of Mexico between the two Oceans and its position in isthmian America bestow our country an exceptional importance for international commerce whereas its configuration renders inland traffic difficult. It is obvious that in a time not far off one of the most remarkable events of the xxth century will be the navigation through one of the American isthmuses on the great canal to be opened thereunto and whose achievement will bestow great benefits on the nations of the East and the West, on account of the greater rapidity of communications and commercial relations with the ports of the West coast of both Americas.

Mexico by its proximity to the said isthmuses and consequently by the great importance for it of the opening of the canal between the two Oceans, as much regarding its commercial enterprises as its political development, is destined to be an essentially maritime and mercantile nation. Our country already connected with Europe by the most rapid way through the United States of North America and clasping hands with the sister nations of Central and South America by navigation on the Caribbean sea and the Pacific Ocean, comes to be the community bridge necessary for the expansion of the commercial movement of Asia, Oceania and South America; and finally, occupying a more advantageous geographical situation than any other nation of the New World, it can accomplish the vaticination of the celebrated explorer Alexander von Humboldt expressed in the following words: *Mexico will be the bridge between the two Oceans for the development of universal commerce.*



Popocatepetl

(From a photograph by Berquet)

CHAPTER II

PRESENT POPULATION OF MEXICO AND ELEMENTS THAT FORM IT.

THEIR CHARACTERS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

HAVING thus described the stage of Mexican nationality we may go on to give a description of the actors.

The population of Mexico, according to the returns of the first general census taken on October 20th, 1895, is of 12,630,863 inhabitants and the mean density is estimated at a little more than 6 inhabitants for every square kilometer. Baron Humboldt, in his *Political Essay on New Spain*, states the population of Mexico by the figure of 6,122,354. Comparing the two figures we find the population of the country has doubled in about 85 years. Most contradictory statements and most antithetical assertions regarding Mexican population have been printed in Geographies of Mexico written abroad and in this country, and in other books about our Republic by national as well as foreign authors. According to Matthias Romero indigenous population is decreasing ever since 1810; according to other writers it has increased, the truth being that there is no ground whereon to state either the one or the other phenomenon. Nothing can be asserted honestly about the growth of population of Mexico considering the

want of facts and the defectiveness of the few we possess. From 1893 up to this date the General Register Office (Dirección General de Estadística) has been making inquiries about natality and mortality in the Republic, the following table showing the results of their work:

Years	Births	Marriages	Deaths
1893	342,791	49,750	487,931
1894	351,144	50,469	452,287
1895	383,717	53,691	391,177
1896	406,975	52,968	404,654



Indians of the State of Veracruz
El municipio de San Juan

These figures proceed from the civil registries of the nation; but as a part of the inhabitants, among whom there are many different religious denominations, fail to comply with the prescription to inscribe their children on the respective register, we may feel sure that the number of births is greater than that which appears in those official statements and therefore no valid inference can be made from them. The figures expressing the general mortality of the country must be admitted as being correct, considering no deceased is buried without a certificate of death and all the cemeteries throughout the country are entirely laical.

During the colonial epoch it was easier than now to study the progress or growth of population, because they inscribed scrupulously on the parish registers all who were born and all who died. From statements of those times we learn that for every 170 births registered 100 deaths were registered.

Not wishing to incur in falsehoods, errors and incorrectnesses about Mexican population we can only speak in general terms of the elements it is composed of and which derive their origin from three large trunks: the European, the African and the American. The European trunk was once exclusively represented by the conqueror, the African by the slave brought by the former and the American by the aborigines.

The inhabitants of Mexico can be decomposed thus: Europeans or white, some creoles, mestizoes, indigenous and negroes.

The Europeans or white constitute the foreign element of population come over directly or born here of foreign parents. All European nationalities are to be found represented, but the Spanish, French, German, English and Anglo-American are predominant.

The mestees or mestizos, an important element of the Mexican nationality and one of the most abounding, if not the most numerous of all, are a cross-breed between the conqueror first and the European in general afterwards on one side and the indigenous on the other.

The indigenous, more or less pure descendants of the ancient peoples of Mexico, form the other chief element of Mexican population and lastly the negroes, scanty in number, represent the descendants of the ancient slaves.

About the primitive inhabitants of America much has been written and many discussions have been sustained; we will not enter into particulars about this matter deeming them rather useless.² An endeavour to ascertain the origin of those early inhabitants would lead us into a labyrinth the extrication from which would be difficult; be it enough therefore to state biological investigations allow to assert that the first inhabitants of the New Continent were autochthons.

The descendants of the ancient Mexicans that form part of the present population of this country do not exhibit any well marked physical character of homogeneity. It is a fact well ascertained by historians that the tribes occupying the territory when the conquest took place were very numerous and ethnographically different. Unable to make any precise statement and guided by what is to be observed at the present day we may tell that the chief of those tribes have their representatives among the living aboriginal Mexican population, the most remarkable, enumerated by order of importance, being the following: the Mexican, Aztec or Naho; the



Mestizo woman of Yucatán

Mixteca-Zapotec; the Tarax or Michoacan; the Otomí; the Maya, peninsular or Yucatecan, the Opata and the Pima. If from a merely ethnographical point of view there is no unity in the indigenous Mexican population, neither is it to be observed in the sociological respect.

The indigenous population of Mexico being the most ancient of all and everything regarding it having a great importance, claims our attention first. We have already become acquainted with the inorganic part of its seat and something has been said about the organic side; now we are going to describe its physical, intellectual and moral characters. Our appreciations bear quite a general character showing only the common features of the full physiognomy and leaving room for types that differ from our description in one sense or another.

From an anthropological point of view the present Mexican race, according to the researches of Dr. Francis Martínez Baca, exhibits the following characters: 1st, predominance of dolichocephaly there being 86,6 % dolichocephalics against 13,4 % brachycephalics; 2nd, the

extreme forms of both dolichocephaly and brachycephaly are not very numerous, the intermediate forms being rather predominant; 3rd, in the normal individual, whatever the cranial shape may be, symmetrical forms are prevailing at the rate of 51,4 % against 48,6 %. The number of extreme forms of dolichocephaly and brachycephaly increases remarkably the more we go back to the ancient times wherein they had their origin.

The conclusions arrived at by Dr. Martínez Baca are founded on full craniometrical studies, these being the scientific ground whereon to build up the classification of races from an anthropological point of view.



Grot of Cacahuamilpa

Entering on a less scientific field we may say of the indigenous of Mexico that they possess the following qualities: they are hardy for toil being endowed with an inexhaustible endurance in spite of their middling stature, tall individuals being met with only as a rare exception; women are rather low of stature, yet there is no lack of models of real beauty among them; the colour of their skin is a bronzed brown with a multitude of shades, the palms and soles showing a yellowish white tinge; the veins visible in white people are hidden under the skin; the forehead is narrow, ample in its posterior part and showing a slight depression upwards; hair is abundant and

very black, of a beautiful blackness, of great thickness and always slack; baldness is unknown among them and hoariness is very rarely to be seen; their eyes are large, expressive, black with a subicteric tinge, horizontally placed and with a wider separation than in the white race; the nose is ugly, very broad at the base; the mouth is spacious, the teeth are extremely white, most uniform, perennial those of the second dentition, free from caries, though much worn in old people; the beard is rounded and very full, thin beards being very rare; the moustache is like the hair of the scalp, very black, limp, but scanty and totally wanting in the groove of the lip; face oval, neck short, legs very strong, hands and feet small. On account of the sort of life they lead they endure bad weather admirably. The beauty of their teeth has been attributed to the sort of food they live on. The indigenous of the Yucatán peninsula exhibit a most noteworthy character: the roundness of their head and even, although not so pronounced, of

their face. The peninsulars call the head of the Mayas death's head; among them there are some specimens that do not differ much from the Europeans as for their features. Polydactylism is frequent among the descendants of the Nahoas.

Intellectually considered the indigenous of Mexico are deemed to be inept for invention but very apt for imitation. In secondary and professional schools they show greater application than mestizoes and high aptitude for culture.

As for sentiments they are affectionate, obliging, unassuming, obedient and even servile. The expression of their countenance never denotes their state of mind; laughter is seldom to be heard they being melancholic people; they are not impulsive, explosions of passion being rare among them; they are noisy, turbulent and riotous when they feel too much oppressed; cruel against their enemies; distrustful as all conquered, tyrannised and subjugated people; unserved in their festivals and congregations.

It is difficult to state exactly the proportion of indigenous of Mexico who speak Castilian; the only thing that can be averred is that in the States less distant from the Capital the indigenous speak their own tongue and Spanish. Regarding this last language a curious phenomenon, although not a unique one in history, is to be observed.

The Mexican indigenous who speak Castilian (they always call it so) make use of the forms common in the XVI and XVII centuries, that is to say they speak old Castilian and many archaic uses may be learned from them. In view of this phenomenon we may affirm our indigenous have undergone no evolution since then, they have remained stationary. The same curious phenomenon can be noted in the North of America, where among the Canadians many an old French word is still in current use.

The indigenous languages of Mexico have been studied under two distinct aspects: in their former state in which they were found at the time of the Conquest and in their present state. The ancient aspect of this question has been treated long ago by as judicious as competent writers, there being two works of positive merit that condense the results reached at: the «Descriptive and comparative table of the indigenous languages of Mexico or a Treatise on Mexican philology,» written by Francis Pimentel, and «Geography of the languages or an ethnographical map of Mexico, preceded by an essay of classification of the same languages and remarks on the immigrations of the tribes, by the licenciado and engineer Immanuel Orozco y Berra.»



Mestizo of Yucatán

The latter aspect of the question, the most important one at the present moment «the indigenous languages in the state they are in now» has been exposed for the first time by Dr. Antony Peñafiel. After nine years of patient investigations forming comparative vocabularies of two hundred and fifty words of each tongue or dialect, Dr. Peñafiel found that the indigenous languages spoken on the whole extent of the Republic are fifty five in number, viz: amuzgan, apache, cahitan, cahuillan, castalenian, comitec, coran, cucapan, cuicatec, cuilatec, chiatin, chiapanec, chichimec or pame, chinantec, chocan, chol, chontal, huave, huastec,

huichol, ixcatec, jovan, kakehikel, kiché or quiché, kikapoan, matlatzincan or pirindan, maya, mayoan, mazahuan, mazatec, mexican, mixe, mixtec, ópatan or tegüin, otomí, papabuc, pápagan, piman, popoloc or popoluc, setlai, seri, soltec, tarahumar or otní, tarasc, tepehua or tepelhuan, tlapanec or yope, tojoladal, totonac, trique, tzendal, tzotzil, yaquí, yuma, zapotec and zoque.



Indian woman of Teh. antepes

The proceeding used by Dr. Peñafiel in his investigation allows to become aware of the transformations or invasions those languages have undergone and so he feels sure he can assert that the *Zoltec* language is disappearing for lack of communication, that Mexican has been substituted by Castilian in Colima and that the intercourse between Mixtec and Zapotec people is generating a new language.

The emigrating conquered peoples left behind as a foot print or track of their residence either a complete language or only the names of the seats they occupied. It is

indeed a most remarkable fact that tradition perennially conserves the names given by different tribes to places they formerly occupied and afterwards abandoned.

Dr. Peñafiel in his studies makes us acquainted also with the geographical distribution of these fifty five languages.

Sr. Orozco y Berra, in his above mentioned work classified the indigenous languages into eleven families, thirty five distinct tongues and sixty nine dialects, adding sixteen more without classifying them. Comparing these figures with those of Dr. Peñafiel we find clearly a diminution of the number of languages and dialects in the course of time.

From a merely social standpoint it is of the greatest importance to know the indigenous languages of the country, because, there being many indigenous ignoring the Castilian speech, civilisation must be brought to them in their own language. The work of the missionaries during the colonial epoch must be taken largely into account by him who contemplates

seriously the social incorporation of the indigenous of Anáhuac into the remainder of Mexican population. The country that exhibits on its territory the richest archaeological monuments of America as an eloquent testimonial of what the forefathers of the present indigenous were in matters of civilisation; the nation that shows from North to South such ruins as those of Casas Grandes in Chihuahua; ancient remainders and corpses conserved, in Sonora; fragments of admirable buildings, in Durango; ruins like those of La Quemada, in Zacatecas; fortified towns like those of Sierra Gorda, in Querétaro and those of the Sierra de Tepoxtlán and those of Xochicalco, in Morelos; palaces like those of Mitla, in Oaxaca; ruins like those of Palenke, in Chiapas, like those of Yaxchilán on the banks of the Usumacinta, like those of Papantla, in Veracruz, like those of Hoch-Ol, in Champeche and like those of Uxmal and Chichén-Itzá, in Yucatán, must not remain idle when looking at the precarious material and intellectual situation, not to say the «wretched condition» that has befallen the successors of them who built those temples, palaces and monuments that reveal an advanced state of progress. Glorifying the past of the indigenous we shall teach them to better their future.

The conquerors of Mexico, sons of a warlike and in the xvi century prepollent and fanatical people, did not bring along with them a retinue of merchants and agriculturers, but anxious for military glory, craving to widen their dominions and to spread their faith they came at the head of armies of soldiers and monks. Therefore they did not restrict themselves to take possession of the first discovered lands in order to settle thereon for tilling, but they advanced

into the interior up to the heart of Anáhuac in order to submit the Mexicans and impose upon them their religious creed and social order, and once victorious and triumphant they dealt out among themselves the territory with all its dwellers obliging them to work for their new masters. At the same time a colony was formed, crusade was introduced and Conquest imposed and this may well be said to have been an adventure, a military exploit with its tinge of an epopec.

It is important to know the ethnical elements of Mexican nationality from their origins going back to the xvi century, because the anterior state determines the present one and because thus a better knowledge is obtained of the two principal types of the dwellers of Mexico, the *indigenous* and the *mestizo*.

The conqueror once transplanted into Mexico could not possibly uphold his character



Indians of the State of Mexico

intact, because the Mexican element was to modify it unavoidably. The fusion of the European and American elements took place and a predominance was to be established on behalf of the strongest, of the most active, of the most capable, through the resources at his disposal, to overcome the obstacles that might spring up in his path. It is not the physical strength that decides the triumph when conqueror and conquered amalgamate; Roman history furnishes abundant teachings to prove this thesis: it is the vigour of civilisation that bestows preponderance. A well organised society, strong because numerous and settled, as the ancient Mexican empire was, could not be effaced from the catalogue of the nations, could not disappear after the fight without leaving some tracks of its existence. The fusion of the Spanish and Mexican civilisation was of so great a transcendency that it marked for ever the destinies of Mexico.

The conquerors shielded by their governments always presented the same characters; the prestige of dominion fills them with arrogance and they have all the feelings absolute power inspires, lacking therefore the consciousness of *responsibility*. Spanish Government with good faith tried by a thousand means to prevent abuses in the colonies, but all attempts proved unfruitful. The Spanish conqueror finding in Mexico a numerous and long settled population, could submit it as he really did, protect it or tyrannise it, debase it or enlighten it in the European sense, but never exterminate or even dislodge it. The nationality of the ancient Mexicans received its death blow from the iron hand of the subjugator who destroyed their government, pursued their religion, abolished their laws and the inanimate body of the armless Aztec empire fell down inert, motionless and in a state of moral and intellectual decomposition by the loss of its vital elements. The new nationality, the new social organism founded upon the ruins of the ancient empire, found itself blocked up and at first seemed to become asphyxiated amidst the uproar and disorder begot by the new elements of the new regime and the old, downcast and derelict ones of the ancient rule. At the beginning of the second period of Mexican history the task of organising required men of superior qualities, true masters in the art of governing.

From the day when Aztec monarchy locked for ever with a golden key the immortal Cuauhtemoc and the Spaniards entered as masters the town seated at the bottom of the great Valley, great difficulties arose how to reorganise the conquered people in order not to let it die among its own ruins and to amalgamate with the institutions and customs of the Aztec those of the conquerors. From that epoch the progress of Mexico and its future are intimately interwoven with the destiny of the indigenous population which has been and will be, as long as it may exist and as long as there will be an independent Mexico, the main mass of the population (not by its number, but considered as a social force) determining the movement of Mexican nationality. To overlook it, would be equivalent to neglecting important elements of a whole, and therefore it must always be appreciated in whatever project of regeneration of Mexican Society may be framed.

The fusion of the Spaniards with the ancient Mexicans, whether the work of necessity or of a preconceived plan, was but a partial one, as it was to be expected considering the relative abundance of the conquered people and the relative scarcity of the conquering. Spain had numerous colonies simultaneously without that of Mexico and as in large extents of country there was no conquest in the true sense of the word, but only a nominal possession of the region, as it still happens in vast territories of the Republic that there is not to be felt any

authority of our government nor any influence of our civilisation, the embodiment of the aborigines into the Spanish civilisation took place only in part, by the same last mentioned motive. Out of the fusion of the Iberian element with the Maya, Zapotec, Aztec, etc., there sprang the mestizoes who form the enlightened element or class of the country in whose hands there was always laid the steering of the Mexican Society in the moral, intellectual and material order of things.

It is absurd to suppose that any country having been open for centuries to international intercourse, can boast to ascertain the purity of its ethnical elements. The denomination: «Latin nations» does not signify more than that these peoples speak languages derived from the Latin tongue. The blending of different ethnical elements into one people is a common fact and successive fusions render the asseverations of purity of the blood an absurdity.

The Spanish conquerors classified the Mexicans by *castes* in order to stamp them as unworthy to hold public offices. In order to give an idea of the ways how in the colonial epoch the different races of dwellers mingled with one another, we are going to acquaint the reader with some of the *castes* acknowledged by the Spaniards according to the statements on the old parish registers. The child of a Spaniard with an Indian woman was called a *mestizo*, that of a Spaniard with a mestizo woman a *castizo*, that of a Spaniard with a castizo woman a *criollo*, that of a Spaniard with a negress a *mulato* and the child of an Indian and a mulatto parent was a *zambo*.



Indian woman of the State of Mexico

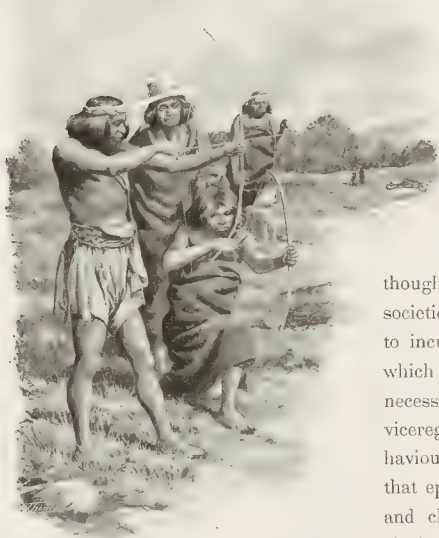
We must remark that the fusion of the Spaniards with the ancient Mexicans was not a complete one in the physiological sense of the word, for only the male Spanish element entered into the fusion, the cases of crossing between an aboriginal man and a Spanish woman being very rare.

We said the amalgamation between the conquerors and the conquered was not a total one; that part of the latter which did not undergo the incorporation is the stock of the present indigenous element whose particular conditions from the Conquest up to this day must be studied on account of their relations to the general prosperity of the nation.

The Spanish conquerors not being numerous enough to assimilate frankly all the Mexicans they had subjugated in order to rise them to their own level of civilisation, nor cruel enough to destroy those they were unable to assimilate, annihilated them morally. This annihilation was more perceivable and intense in the districts first occupied by the conquerors, but did not extend far beyond the town of Mexico; thus the circumstance that in many distant States the conqueror did not get to prevail, brought about the difference of social condition

which is to be observed among the indigenous up to this day. Those who dwell around the old towns are the vilest and most degraded, whilst those who live in desert places remote from the populous centres show opposite characters and offer unequivocal proof of consciousness of their own dignity.

The tenebrious path on which Spain was put by the suspicious policy of Philip II, terrible mixture of religious fanaticism and jealousy for authority, of inquisition and absolute dominion, made its influence felt in the Spanish colonies, although perhaps less than in the mother country.



Tarahumar Indians

As a most effectual means to preclude all danger of emancipation, they contrived to keep the indigenous for ever in the condition of minors and therefore they delivered them into the perpetual tutelage of a clergy that without the least doubt was possessed of the most charitable sentiments for their tutored but which, overfanatical, never

thought of rendering them useful members of the societies that move on earth. It would be unfair to inculcate the Spaniards alone for the state in which we find the indigenous now, this being a necessary consequence of their state during the viceregal times; for to judge scientifically the behaviour of the conquerors we must go back to that epoch, live with their ideas, feel their needs and cherish their aspirations. Then like now, albeit the great change in policy, governments choose as good ones all means that guarantee their interests. Granting the circumstance that the Con-

quest of Mexico was an accomplished fact, any conqueror, in order to reconstruct the new nationality with the old and the new elements, would have had to struggle with the same difficulties encountered by the Spanish vanquishers. The ancient Mexicans who by themselves had attained a superior degree of civilisation and would have reached a level of culture distinct from that possessed by the present indigenous, had not their ascending march been interrupted by the Conquest, were hindered in their evolution by the presence of the conqueror and in the conflict of the two civilisations the result was the destruction and retrocession of the Aztec civilisation and of the people working at it. The Spaniards did not do all they might have done for the benefit of the vanquished and hence the pacific and benevolent character of the indigenous and the habits of obedience and retirement they still show to day.

The education of the indigenous intrusted to the clergy was always in perfect harmony with the peculiar character of the educator and the stand point they were placed on. An educator who looks on labour as the effect of a divine curse and therefore despises all things

referring to this lower world and only contemplates the life beyond the tomb, must naturally and logically care above all for the salvation of the souls, and true curers of souls they were, the educators of the ancient Mexicans. There is nothing strange in this; what is indeed strange and surprising is that other results have been expected; and the lesson ought to be turned to account by directing the education with the aim to breed useful citizens on earth and not blissful souls in heaven.

The conquered Mexicans without ceasing to look with distrust on their oppressors and



Partial view of the valley of Mexico taken from Chapultepec

with no other education and instruction than the religious one, having become rather fanatics than religious, turned their active hatred of the first years into passive distrust which they still conserve and reduced to the sad condition of toiling beasts they were losing progressively together with all hope of redemption the consciousness of their dignity, until at last they fell into the sad and almost punishable carelessness in which we see them in spite of the efforts, not very numerous indeed nor pertinent, put into play by the Republic to redeem them. Since the Conquest up to our days there has been no lack of representatives of the indigenous who distinguished themselves by their talents and their sacrifices on behalf of the country demonstrating what their fellows of race are apt to achieve when they are surrounded by favorable conditions.

The aboriginal and Spanish elements which did not amalgamate together evolved divergently and the difference of conditions between them created so unsurmountable a barrier that we see to-day in the religious worships of Mexico kept up the most remarkable antagonism between them and the indigenous population.

If conquered and conquerors had fully incorporated, the fusion would have produced a homogeneous population perhaps better than the component parts; we should not have in our society that profound abyss which separates one class from the other and turns up the most serious obstacle to the political progress of the country which requires equality at law. Ingrafting two plants will yield another more luxuriant and beautiful one than either stock or scion, but two seeds always give two different fruits.

Thus we have explained how the indigenous has always been one of the chief elements among the inhabitants of this country. In the opinion of some they deserve much, while others think them a hindrance in the way of our progress; the fact is they have been and will ever be an influential factor in the evolution of our society.

The illustrious writer Francis Pimentel in his noteworthy work *Memoir on the indigenous race* studies the social condition of our aboriginal population with a rare judgment and abundant observations and inspired by a feeling of kindness towards them intends to inquire the causes of the undeniable fact of their prostration and decay. He sums up these causes in the following terms: «As first cause of the degradation of the Indians we have ascertained the defects of their ancient civilisation; as second the ill treatment they received from the Spaniards, as third the lack of an enlightened religion; now as another cause we may add the *defects of the Código de Indias*. Lastly there remains one more cause which we think abased the indigenous race, viz: *the contempt with which the conquerors looked down upon it and which of course must humiliate and abase it.*»

Without adopting unconditionally the first cause about which we should raise some reservations we accept it in its general purport and we admit the others without any restraint, fixing our attention on the last being of present actuality. Most marked indeed is the contempt with which people look down upon the indigenous in Mexico and there is no lack of well bred persons who will not even stoop to think of the situation of the Indians. Whenever someone thinks of it and attempts to remedy it, he is disdainfully branded as a socialist this being the anathema of the epoch. Only vulgarity of judgment and an utter lack of morality can induce to despise the indigenous, they being capable of civilisation and forming the actual fulcrum of society because they constitute the broad mass of the Mexican proletariat. Amidst the most terrible sufferings and crushed by all sorts of hardship the indigenous population is sustaining us socially speaking; it carries on the agricultural labour throughout the Republic, works the mines and effectuates all hard and heavy toils; it defended our territorial integrity, it was decimated in our struggles and contentions and it pays almost exclusively the contingent of blood for the fatherland as it paid it for the revolutionists giving rise to the expression of terrible eloquence *flesh for the cannon*.

Not to acknowledge that the indigenous have a large share in our actual social life and to deny they possess virtues and aptitudes, only because they are no capitalists or lawyers or politicians or scholars for the most part of them, is the worst of all imaginable vulgarities. The proletariat is one of the chief axes of our social order and in Mexico our su-

bordination to the indigenous is so patent that our actual existence depends exclusively on them.

By the change of regime in the present century the indigenous have made no advance, they only changed their tutors and the tutor Congress, to tell the truth, has done less for them than the tutor Viceroy.

The indigenous farmer is poor and seldom owner of the land he cultivates by the most primitive procedures, not making use of manures ignoring even their function. He needs association in order to introduce ameliorations into his cultures because capital is entirely wanting, not for lacking the habit of saving, but because he hardly earns the necessary to live on badly.

If from the indigenous population we pass to that descendant of the conquerors and the mestizoes, heirress of its antecessors, we find it, not only physiologically but also sociologically, considering it in its totality presenting the following characters: education incomplete and in a certain meaning actually vicious. It possesses or rather conserves the consciousness of superiority it acquired in the colonial epoch and although not authorised by the laws it is an *undeniable fact in spite of them*. Three great causes have determined this dominion viz: the greater culture, the power of rule by government they having always had a nearly complete control of public affairs, and the possession of the greater part of the wealth of the country. The mestizoes, ardent and impressionable, more apt to imagine than to observe, to fancy more than to consider, rash and not cautious, bred with a theological or metaphysical and literary education, either have remained behind in the progressive march or have gone farther in their craving of advance for their country. Ever since the Independence the Mexican mestizoes and the creoles, their descendants, divided into two parties, both of them distanced from the nature of things because of their ignorance of the actual world; not knowing the true needs of Mexican society they contrived to agitate it during two generations.

The foreign elements of Mexican population by order of their importance may be grouped thus: Spaniards, Frenchmen, Anglo-americans, Germans and Englishmen. All of them devote themselves to commerce and trade and they have got into their hands the principal sources of wealth of the Republic. The Spaniard spreads throughout the territory, he is to be seen as well in the towns as on the fields, dedicated either to agriculture or to commerce, on the highlands



Indian of the State of Veracruz
From a photograph by Briquet

just as on the lowlands and always industrious, undertaking and persevering. The remainder of the foreign population has taken root chiefly in the large towns and only the Anglo-americans are to be seen in the remote mining districts. The Spaniard is in Mexico the only foreigner who systematically and purposely incorporates into the Mexican population marrying a mestizo or an indigenous woman and identifying his mode of life and deportment with that of the country he inhabits.

The negro population much reduced in number in its pure state lives confined to the coasts or the hot regions in general for which the negroes were imported during the rule of the viceroys under the slave régime. Free since the proclamation of Independence it may be said, by one of the first acts of our liberator, the negroes have conserved their ancient seats where they dedicate themselves to the toilsome agricultural labours living in a condition that does not differ from that of the indigenous.

Such are broadly stated the elements that compose the present Mexican Society of which much is to be expected by means of an education systematically conducted, an instruction judiciously imparted and the acknowledgement on the part of the enlightened and wealthy classes of their duties on behalf of the indigenous.

Austin Aragón.

VOLUME FIRST



Political history



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

THE

Political history

OF THE UNITED STATES





PART SECOND

POLITICAL HISTORY

THE ABORIGINAL CIVILISATIONS AND THE CONQUEST.
 THE COLONIAL PERIOD AND THE INDEPENDENCE. THE REPUBLIC.
 THE PRESENT ERA.



The Usumacinta

BOOK FIRST

THE ABORIGINAL CIVILISATIONS AND THE CONQUEST

CHAPTER FIRST

THE PRIMITIVE INHABITANTS. THE CIVILISATION OF THE SOUTH. MAYAS AND KICHÉS

The primitive inhabitants.—All is conjecture regarding the origin of the Americans; nothing certain is known; nothing certain is known about the origins of the nations. Was America in contact with the Atlantic shores of Europe and Africa by means of sunken Atlantid? If so, it must be admitted that American mankind is tertiary, because the Atlantid continent belonged to the tertiary period; but there was no tertiary man, there was but his precursor, that being from whom man probably took his origin, our zoological ancestor; of this there are no tracks in American Palaeontology. Was America communicating with Asia through Behring Strait or through the magnific intercontinental bridge of islands? Did its population come thence or was it aboriginal in the whole strength of the term, the American continent being a centre of creation as is affirmed by them who maintain the original diversity of our kind? It is apparent that the hypotheses touch with their ends the most arduous problem of the natural history of man; they are irradiations of a wavering torch that penetrate,

without illumining it, into the gloom of genesis. And, since the existence of man in America from the quaternary period is beyond all doubt and his narrow ethnical relationship with the populations of insular Asia is equally doubtless, let us suppose that before Asia and America had got the configuration they possess to-day, there was in the northern part of the Pacific Ocean a vast archipelago and that therein that group of mankind made its appearance which at one time peopled some maritime districts of eastern Asia and the North of the American Continent then being formed. Perhaps the Eskimos are remainders of these Proto-americans, may be the Fuegians at the other, the southern, end of the Continent are so; it is also likely enough that other groups having their origin on the continental part of Asia came over to mix with those primitive people. Indeed, the distinct anatomical structure, the diversity in the shape of the skull, most pronounced in the oldest American populations, indicate the presence on our Continent of families of different origin.

Be this as it may, the central region of our country was peopled since the quaternary epoch; primitive man witnessed in the Valley of Mexico the immense conflagration that determined its present form and at night in his noiseless canoe furrowed the lake on which he saw reflected the flames he certainly imagined eternal of the volcanic tuft of Ajusco. Is it from these geological men that the sedentary and soil tilling populations proceed met with in Anáhuac by the first Nahoan migrations? Is it from them the group of the *Otomis* derives that contrived to organise considerable social entities and to erect important cities like Manhemi on the smiling borders of the Tula? To none of these interrogations science can afford to answer categorically.

In the quaternary ages two phenomena of highest importance determined the ethnical destiny, let us call it so, of the American continent: the final periods of the rising of the Andes which in centuries of centuries had been emerging from the bottom of the Pacific enclosed in an immense volcanic barrier and that ended in the quaternary age by giving America its present physiognomy and severing it from Asia, and in consequence thereof, and this is the other fact of total transformation we hinted at, the descent of the temperature in the northern regions of the united continents. The hot and temperate climate which, as is proved with irrefragable testimony by the vegetable and animal residues found on the polar border, permitted an indefinite multiplication of the primitive groups of mankind, disappeared gradually and therewith the descent of the Americans towards the South began. Both the fauna and the flora were transformed; the hot climate species fled or disappeared or dwindled into dwarfs perpetuating themselves as the Eskimo and the Siberian did on the ice crust of the Arctic regions. The groups descended and expanded throughout America during the long night preceding History, staying in the valleys of the large rivers and on the shores of lakes abounding with fish, fleeing towards South always threatened by other ferocious nomads coming after one another in search of easy food or climbing up the rugged steepes of the mountains in search of game or shelter. Those who could take root in the soil and resist the rush of the human current, became the founders of civilisation.

Civilisation of the South.—In the valleys of the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Ohio, there lies perhaps the impenetrable secret of the origins of the great Mexican civilisations. Just as there was a remarkable variety of tongues, there was a well perceivable variety of cultures;

if not all, most of the languages spoken in the country now called Isthmian America and which comprises in its area the Mexican and Central-american republics, may be grouped around three large nucleuses: the maya, the nahoa and another much vaguer and diffused corresponding perhaps to the purely aboriginal group which the immigrant tribes found settled everywhere and which either became mingled and blended with the new comers or with savage wildness kept up their pristine autonomy like the *Otomis*.

Making such a distribution, rather perfunctory and incomplete we admit, of the languages of the isthmian territories, we have pointed out that of the civilisations. Among them two types are clearly to be distinguished: that of the *Maya-kichés* whose centre of diffusion might be localised in the middle basin of the Usumacinta and which prevailed on the vast territory of the



Teotihuacán. Pyramid of the Sun

present States of Yucatan, Campeche, Tabasco and Chiapas, as also in Guatemala and the isthmus of Tehuantepec, and, in second place, that of the civilisation of the *Nahoa*s which had its centre in the lacustral regions of the Mexican table land (*Anáhuac*) spread over the large meridional valleys and penetrated into the civilisation of the South sometimes modifying it profoundly. The culture of the Mixteco-tzapotecs, the Mechuacans, is perhaps intermediary and not genuine, and there are undoubtful tokens that the primitive populations represented by the ancestors of the present *Otomis*, also contrived to organise a civilisation, since they founded large towns, one of them being Manhemi, on which the Toltecs set up their capital.

It is a well known fact that in the basins of the rivers that are now the chief arteries for the circulation of wealth in the Anglo-american world, there exist vast *mounds* constructed by the inhabitants of those regions in prehistoric times; these mounds intended to serve as fortresses, sepulchres or foundations of temples show divers forms. In them or near them

articles of pottery were found and vestiges of considerable villages which reveal the presence there, in far remote centuries, of a numerous group of human beings who had risen to civilisation; this group has been baptised by the Anglo-american archaeologists with the name of *mound-builders*. The groups that in our country chiefly instituted the *civilisation of the South*, were likewise *mound-builders*. Their temples, palaces, fortresses, as well in the fluvial regions as in the dry inland districts of the Yucatecan peninsula, were built upon artificial hills; is there any ethnical kindred with one another (1)?

The particular fact of some *mounds* of the Northern districts showing the form of animals which like the mastodon disappeared since the quaternary epoch or very soon after it; the pipes found in the mounds representing elephants, llamas, lories, a clear revelation that the temperature we now call tropical still reached as high up as the parallels near the polar circles when the *mound-builders* pullulated in the valleys of the Mississippi and its tributaries; the succession of secular forests over huge constructions, all this proves the most remote antiquity of the civilisation of these tribes which probably lived under a theocratic or priestly rule, the only one capable to obtain the amazing mass of manual work necessary to effectuate the gigantic constructions spread over Continental America.

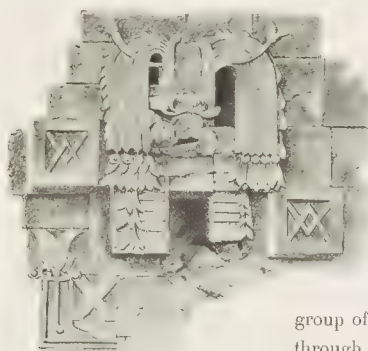
The invasions of the nomad tribes obliged the *mound-builders* to multiply their defence works and to give up slowly the territories that were occupied and laid waste by the groups which fleeing from the icy frosts sought heat and game in southern regions. The northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico saw how in that still utterly dark dawn of history, the emigrant *mound-builders* got amassed from Tamaulipas to Florida where a part of them perished or fell back into the primitive wild state dissolving in the surge of nomad tribes, whilst others continued their secular exodus along the western borders of the Mexican Mediterranean and other groups perhaps, the navigators, went to cross the rivers and to follow the coasts in their light vessels provided with sails as were the Yucatecan ones met with by Columbus, spread over the Antilles. Could they pass from Cuba to the western shores of the Caribbean sea and penetrate into the Yucatecan peninsula? It will never possible to affirm so, but it is a fact that the language of the Mayas and that of the Antillans seem to belong to the same linguistic groups and it is most likely that islanders and peninsulars stood in communication from the oldest times.

Maya tradition has transmitted us the recollections of a first group of settlers, the *chanes*, whose *totem* was the serpent (2). They invaded the peninsula leaving the sea at their backs, this showing clearly enough that they came from there. They doubtlessly subjugated and enslaved the native population and imposed on them their own religion and language, built the mounds or *cues* spread over the peninsula from the frontiers of Honduras to the shores of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf. This family of the *Chanes* marked out its path, in the part of the territory civilised by it and named *Chacnucitan*, by establishing settlements that were

(1) In order to preserve the synthetic character of this work we can only point out the proofs for our opinions without entering into disquisitions about them; it is enough for us to maintain their strictly hypothetical meaning.

(2) As by the gathering of more facts and their better classification we become more and more acquainted with the origins of the religions, the importance of totemism, the stock of animal worship or zoolatry stands out more prominent. It is well known that the worship of the ancestor under the name of the animal or *totem* by which he was distinguished in the herd, was transformed afterwards into the adoration of the animal itself. Ophiolatry or serpent worship is that which had more followers among American tribes.

increasing under the shelter of superb mound structures destined to be houses of the gods, of the priests and priestesses, of the principal chiefs, or sepulchres, fortresses, observatories whose ruins given up to a slow decay by our carelessness, amaze and exasperate by their greatness and their mystery. Bakhahal first and Chichen-Itzá afterwards, were the capitals of this theocratic monarchy organised by a hieratic person or family to whom tradition gives the name of Itzamná. Should it be a groundless supposition to remount to these epochs of uncertain chronology but which the most circumspect authors date as far back as the second or third century of our era, for the foundation, by a branch of the *chanes*, of *Na-cham*, afterwards called Palenke, in the basin of the Usumacinta? The fact is that the close affinity of the Kiché and Maya groups is proven beyond all doubt by their aspect, their manner of building and living, their writing and their language; the differences between them constitute two varieties of one and the same civilisation (1). Indeed, early compilers of Maya and Kiché



Uxmal. Detail of the Governor's house

traditions (Lizana and Ordóñez) ascribe to both of the groups the same Antillan origin, being of opinion that *Itzamná*, the great priest founder of Maya civilisation is identical with Votan, the creator of Kiché civilisation. Of this civilisation we do not know more than the relics, the buildings, the monuments, the inscriptions, and these remain mute. Something more is known about the Mayas.

Several of the large Maya and Kiché capitals had been founded already when a new group of immigrants penetrated into the Yucatecan peninsula through a spot on the coast of the present State of Campeche (Champoton). Was it another branch of the *mound-builders* that during the great exodus of the Mississippi valley tribes had been spreading by slow degrees over all the shore of the Gulf, from Louisiana to Tabasco, throwing out some of its numerous groups into the Sierra Madre Oriental and upon the table land of Anáhuac? Of their entrance into Yucatan memory is kept in the Katunic traditions where it is spoken of as *the great descent of the Tutulxius*, or, to conform the writing to the Maya pronunciation, *shiues*; this, chronographers say, was going on about the V century (2).

The Itzas under the rule of their pontiff-kings formed around Itzamal, T-oh and other centres a sort of confederacy under the hegemony of Chichen-Itzá. When the Shiues felt quite identified with the Mayas their congeners, they joined them in their frightful struggles against Chichen which was destroyed, the priests emigrating to the coasts of the Gulf and settling at

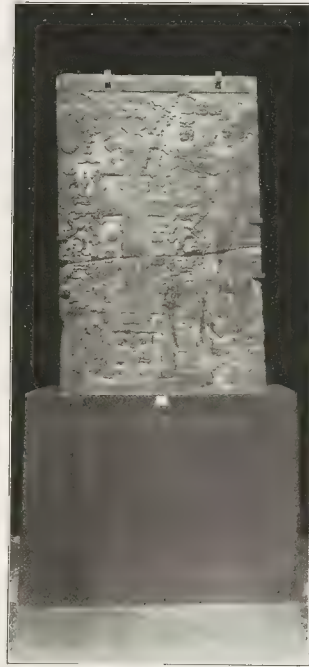
(1) In all we state in this short account about the Maya culture we follow what the most illustrious and conscientious Yucatecan writer, Francis Molina Solis, says in the preliminary study of his excellent work titled: *Discovery and conquest of Yucatan*. Mérida, 1896.

(2) The very scarce vestiges of the *mound-builders* showing an obvious brachycephaly of the skulls are a new indication of their affinity with the Mayas.

Champoton, whence the Itzas, the holy men, at the end of three centuries or less, returned to the peninsula where the Shius were ruling having constructed mound cities among which Uxmal was prominent. The struggle was tenacious and seems to have ended with a transaction: the Itzas rebuilt their holy town Chichen and under their auspices the federal city of Mayapan was erected as an official residence of the confederate Itzas and Shius.

During this central era of the Maya culture, the *Mayapan Era*, an intimate contact began with the Nahoas culture that had been invading already the Kiché groups. A prophet and legislator or rather, perhaps, a priest family founded on the borders of the Usumacinta the new worship of Guk-umat and penetrating into Yucatan through Champoton established at Mayapan the altars of Kukul-kan, the words Guk-umat and Kukul-kan being exact transcriptions of the Nahoas term *Quetzal-coatl* (1). The sculptures of Palenque as well as those of Uxmal and Chichen reveal the immense transformation the myths and rites suffered by the preachings of the sacerdotal group that wore the name of their deity; although the organisation of the human sacrifices has been ascribed to Kukul-kan, his mission was one of concord and progress. Some religious customs as the Maya baptism and confession seem to have their origin in the teachings of the apostles of the Nahoas god. Astronomic knowledge and writing went ahead with steadier paces after the preachings of the great Nahoas precursor coincident perhaps with the decline of the might of the *Nahoas-Toltecs* in Anáhuac (XI century).

The Yucatecan chronicles relate that in the lapse of time the sovereigns of Mayapan and Chichen, both pretending the heart of the same woman, began an open struggle; the former sought the help of the Aztecs or *Meshis* who had established several military settlements in Tabasco and Xicalanco and aided by these ferocious warriors he vanquished his enemies; the triumphant *Cocomes* domineered the whole Maya land with terrible oppression, till at length the Uxmal rulers put themselves at the head of a rebellion, roused all the tribes, expelled the Aztecs and destroyed Mayapan. It is rather strange that the victorious *Tutulshius* also gave up Uxmal in that tremendous contention, that



Cross of Palenque

(1) The name of *Quetzal-coatl* is generally read as a pure ideogram; in reality it is an ideophonogram. As an ideogram it means: *feathered serpent of Quetzal*; as a semiphonetic sign it denotes the *twin birds* or twin quetzals. In this way it is the hieroglyph of Lucifer or Venus. The Nahoas observing there were two identical stars, twins, the morning one and the evening one, did not surmise they were the same and therefore called them *coatl* or twin, expressing it by the sound of the sign of the serpent, *coatl*. Thus the worship of *Quetzal-coatl* is that of a double deity called *Hesperus* and *Vesperus* by the Latins.

large mountain town remaining abandoned for ever, solitude and mystery surrounding henceforth the dying splendour of her gorgeous palaces. Afterwards the Maya empire was divided into a good many independant dominions ruled by Dynasties which thought themselves derived from the great historic families. In such division and perennial bloody discord they met the Spanish conquerors.

The southern civilisation, both among the Mayas where it could be studied best in spite of the despairing muteness of their writing waiting in vain for a Champollion, and among the Kichés, as well at Chichen and Uxmal as at Palenke and Kopan, shows all the characters of a complete culture as were the Egyptian

and the Chaldean; and like these or perhaps more so, it presents the singular phenomenon to be spontaneous, autochthonous, self-born, indicating an immense psychical force in that human group. A religion, a worship, and, dependent thereon as usually, a science, an art, social morality and organisation, a government, all this is to be found in the Southern civilisation and, indeed, not in a rudimentary state, but rather in a surprising development.

The Maya religion is based on a spiritism, a necessary sequel of the



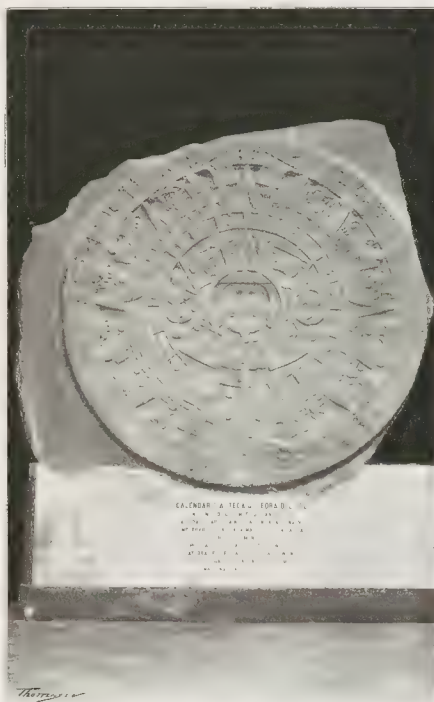
Temple on the border of the Usumacinta

primitive adoration of the dead which grew to be a worship of the forefathers of the domestic and ethnic group; generally these ancestors were designed by the animal names of their respective *totems*, whence the zoolatry worship derived; out of the personage who communicated with the double or soul of the dead, there arose the wizard, the sorcerer, the prophet, the astrologer clever to divine the destiny of every mortal in the stars, and finally the priestly group; this group or class influenced the creeds, organised them, transferred the notion of divinity or superhuman entity to natural objects or the great atmospheric phenomena and then perhaps an invisible being came out as starting point of the divine element whose symbol was the Sun, father of the legislator and civiliser Itzamná (son of the Sun or come from

Orient). Again the Sun divinity had created four principal gods, the *bacabes*, chronometric symbols of the four cardinal points; under them there was a myriad of divinities; there was not a yard of that mysterious land (that of hidden water), there was no act in life that had not its tutelar divinity and many of these divinities had their shades corresponding to a malevolent or diabolical divinity. Popular devotion had made a selection in the peninsula of four great sanctuaries: the Chichen well of the Itzaes, the Kozumel sanctuary of the maritime divinity, that erected on a magnific sepulchral pyramid in honour of one of the Itzamal kings deified as the Mayas were wont to do, and afterwards the Nahoia worships, chiefly that of Quetzal-coatl, came to great importance in the Maya and Kiché countries.

Worship, as was natural, consisted in offerings and bloody sacrifices, frequently human ones, witnessing a deep going Nahoia influence, in hymns, prayers and penances, sometimes horrid ones and in festivals of every description and in so manifold a variety that the Maya-Kiché villages may be said to have lived in perpetual holidays preparing for them by fasting, beginning them with endless songs and dances and finishing them in orgies and unavoidable drunkenness.

The need of those groups in constant migrations and anxious to find a seat, a hearth, a temple, gave the sacerdotal class an immense importance; without the clergy American civilisations would not have existed. The priests, in order to distribute their holidays, observed the motions of the Sun and the stars, alike in Chichen and in Thebes, in Babylon and in Palenke or Tula, were chronologers, arranged calendars and had numerations or modes of counting which they applied to time; they devised a phonetic system of writing, the Maya clergy being one of the three or four that invented writing in the strict meaning of the word. They applied experience to travelling, to disease, to the knowledge of the effects of plants on the system, to history which they held sacred. In their towns composed of light palm covered dwellings they erected on pyramids as a rule, grand monuments destined to be the mansions of their pontiff-king or warrior-king and his wives and of their gods. These monuments, generally the work of several epochs, were of extraordinary forms and shapes; their architecture was simple, rudimentary and, excepting the mound type, characterised by the truncate angular form of the vaults as



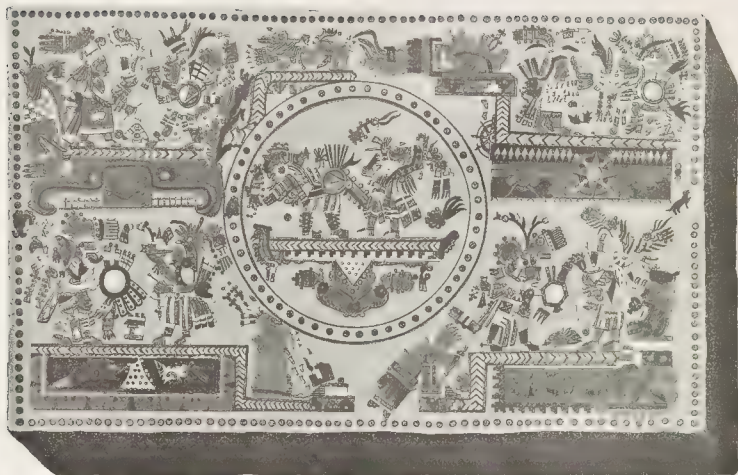
Stone of the Sun

well in Palenke as in Chichén or Uxmal; but the most wondrous thing therein is the soberness of decoration of the interiors (in Yucatán, in Kicheland, better distributed and poorer) and the profusion and exuberance of exterior ornamentation, especially in the friezes. Sculptures, monoliths, statues, reliefs, pictures, some still vivid, inscriptions, overloaded these wonderful monuments which are the life index of a civilisation of extraordinary vivacity.

The lack of domestic animals, both for labour and burden, was the great remora for the full development of American cultures; had there been any, anthropophagy would have disappeared at length, even in its religious form of sacred communion. But among the Americans there was no pastoral age, the transition being directly from the state of hunting and fishing tribes to agriculturists. Their agriculture and their industries required slaves and they had plenty of them; the groups of free men, however, lived submitted to most severe codes enjoining them respect for religion first and then for the *atab* or *cazique* and his agents, for family, property and life; nevertheless suicide was rife among the Mayas. Rural property was communal there as in all pre-columbian America, the produce being distributed proportionally.

The *cazique* being considered as a son of god and often as a god himself, was master of all, his patriarchal tyranny being undisputed; he had organised armies at his disposal and his wars were unceasing. Had the American natives known the use of iron (they used copper a little and gold and silver served them for adornment), the Spaniards, perhaps, would not have been able to conquer the empires they found established. Their ingenious weapons, their well organised individual or collective defences were sufficient to allow them sometimes to show their heroism, but never could give them the victory.

We must stop here or else we should be obliged to review minutely every aspect of human activity, intellectual, moral, economical and artistic, in order to demonstrate a truth known by all who ever fixed their attention on the tribes that colonised the isthmian regions at the South of the Mexican tableland: they were the authors of a civilisation founded upon the necessities of the medium and of their character, and interesting from whatever side you look at it, indeed presenting many a superb face, the groups comprised under the denomination of Maya-Kiché; such was the *civilisation of the South*.



Upper part of the polichromatic stone of the gladiatorial sacrifice

CHAPTER II

ABORIGINES ON THE TABLELAND. ULMECS AND SHICALANCS. THE NAHOAS:

TOLTECS, THEIR HISTORY, THEIR CULTURE. THE INVASION OF BARBARIANS: CHICHIMECS. INTIMATE CONTACT OF THE TOLTECS WITH THE MAYA-KICHÉS. HEIRS OF TOLTEC CULTURE: ACOLIQUAS; AZTECS.

INTERMEDIATE CIVILISATIONS: TZAPOTEC; MECHUACANS. THE MEXICAN EMPIRE

AT THE BEGINNING OF XVI CENTURY

THE aborigines on whom the immigrating Nahoas bestowed the name of *Otomka* or Otomies occupied from time immemorial the basin of the Atoyac, from the Zahuapan to the Mexcala, the countries in which the *metl* (maguey) grows, and probably the western lands where that plant is also known and from which they contrived to extract the intoxicating juice and where they received the name of *Meca*. In its first acception the word *chichimeca* applied by the Nahoas to the tribes they did not consider of their own race, the barbarians, meant «mother of the Mecas» or the tribe from which the others derived, according to a lecture by the eminent historian Alfred Chavero.

It is not possible accurately to mark out the outlines of any of the primitive groups during the crepuscular dark of our old history; from a collation of the chronicles which sometimes state contradictory traditions perhaps not exactly understood, and from the monuments or what can be traced therein, and procuring to keep clear of the tremendous cliffs of the interpolations made by the monks with the pious aim to demonstrate the primitive revelation, we arrive at very modest conjectural results about the origins of the civilisation which developed with tragic majesty on the Mexican tableland.

We are told by the relaters who seem most trustworthy, that the *Ulmecs* and *Shicalanes* (1) coming up from the Orient (*tamoan-chan*) to the tableland, vanquished the giants (*kinames*), leaving their path overspread with mound or pyramid constructions, from the basin of the Pánuco up to the high plains of the tableland where they erected the buildings of Chololan and Teotihuacan. These Ulmecs, as the Nahoas baptised them, in our opinion, are *mound-builders* who coming from Texas had been spreading over the coasts of the Gulf and ascended slowly on the plateau where they founded a theocratic civilisation in which an analogous part as those of Votan and Itzamná is played by Shelua, the constructor of the gigantic *homul*



Alfred Chavero

of Cholula which is three times lower than the pyramid of Khufu, but much broader at its base. Their congeners, the shicalanes, as the Nahoas said, intrude and strengthen the culture of the Kiches and then blend deeply with that of the Mayas under the name of *Tutulshiues*. It also seems to be an established fact that these primitive civilisers maintained their contact with the Southern civilisation and the small idols of Teotihuacan for instance evidence this by their head-dresses and their types.

The Nahoas.—By a climatic transformation perhaps or eventually by the unrestrained felling of the forests in the basins of the Gila, Colorado and Bravo rivers, in prehistoric times, the South-eastern region of the United States became converted into an immense desert waxing what it now is, the *land of thirst*, scanty rains, instantaneously soaked up by an unfathomable porous soil, dead

river beds, naked mountains, rocks and grotts every where. As desolation went on, the inhabitants either died or fled and the country being most densely peopled, as is proved by innumerable vestiges of dwellings and prodigious quantities of pottery, they deluged over the fluvial lands of the *mound builders* or descended southward carrying off everything on their passage.

Among these emigrants there came the sturdy and ferocious groups that formed part of the Chichimec world and the Nahoas. These, according to their traditions, were no nomads; they lived in a pleasant and cultivated country, *old Tlapatan* (on the borders of the Yakee

(1) The ancient sound of the letter *x* having changed into that of *j*, it can no more be used in the transcription of indigenous words; we write *sh* instead of it.

and the Mayo?) and thence came down to the South. The Nahoas went up to the tableland by the Pacific slope, fought with the aborigines (to the extent that one of their tribes, the Colhuas took possession of the Otomi capital, Manliemi) and met with the representatives of the Southern civilisation of which they were pupils.

One select rather sacerdotal than warrior Nahoas tribe followed the general emigration and always clinging to the Pacific Ocean arrived at the southern coast of the present Michoacan. Obeying the voice of their gods, of their priests, they ascended the central plateau and after a long and toilsome peregrination they reached the borders of the Pánuco; there they established their sanctuary, there they took increment and entered into intimate relations with the southern culture of Huastec lately colonised by the Mayas (vestige of the northward reflux of meridional civilisation). Afterwards following the basin of the Pánuco they caused their congeners, the Colhuans, to surrender the ancient capital of the Otomis and they called it «the cat's tail grass

(tular) city,» Tol-lan, or Tula as we say. The inhabitants of Tol-lan hence forth called themselves Tol-tecatl and later on tol-tec signified artificer, illustrious, scholar.

The native and Spanish chroniclers have entangled the history and mythic



Pyramid of Cholula (present state)

symbolism of this group, most interesting among the Americans that reached a superior culture, to such a degree that it is almost impossible to get at more than a fragmentary truth. There seems to be a period of expansion in their history: the Toltecs dominate besides the fertile valley of Tula a good deal of the valley of Mexico and that of Puebla; they conquer the pyramidal sanctuaries of Teotihuacan, where they establish their sacred city devoting the principal pyramids to the Sun and Moon, and that of Cholula whose *homul* remains consecrated to the worship of the star Venus or Quetzal-coatl. The second period is one of concentration, the culture of the Nahoas reaching then its zenith. In one of the sanctuaries of the star Quetzal-coatl, in Little Tula (Tulancingo), a worship seems to have been elaborated, morally superior to the bloody rites imposed by the worship of the Moon (Tetzcatlipoca); human sacrifice, a remainder of the primitive cannibalism of the tribes subjected to long periods of famine, was the highest oblation; the worshippers of Quetzal-coatl are said to have repudiated it and these were so renowned for their astrological lore, their industrial skill and their pertinent advice to agriculturists based on their knowledge of the sky, that they got partisans even in Tol-lan. The warrior caste of which the Nahuas-Colhuas happened to be the most active portion had been ruling till then; some day, by a sort of national reaction the high priest of Quetzal-coatl at Tolantzinco mounts the throne. According to the chroniclers, that happened at the beginning of the ix or x century. The pontiff-king adopted the name of his

deity and both legend and tradition are concordant to personify in him all the excellencies of the Toltec civilisation. He was the purifier of the worship cleaning it from blood and offering only plain sacrifices. Probably in that golden age of the theocracy the priests of Tol-lan, Teotihuacan and Chololan consigned on monuments and ideographic books their stupendous conceptions about the origin and ranking of the gods, the origin of the Universe, the earth and mankind. They told how men had spread over the fragment of the planet known to them; they recorded the recollections of the primitive races, their worships, their immigrations; the great episodes of their travels and their connexions with other peoples. They pictured in lively myths the way how the old worships had been substituted by the new ones, how at Teotihuacan the primitive gods had died giving birth to the worship of the astral deities of the Nahoas-Toltecs (1).



Tlaloc

Like all the religions that starting from the worship of a dead person ascend to the worship of the forefathers which becomes that of boundless Nature and through the drift towards unity inherent to the intellectual structure of man, tend to the worship of a soul or a sole deity and, before, to that of an uppermost God on whom all others are dependant, the religion of the Nahoas had come to consider as supreme divinity the Sun calling it by different names and representing it by different images. All the priests acknowledged it so and in some of their sanctuaries, according to the assertion of certain chroniclers, they believed the existence of a being of whom the Sun was a symbol but who was too elevated to be represented or even adored, the *Tloque-Nahuac*, an invisible being, uncreated and creator, author of the first human couple.

Among the endless swarm of deities whose symbolic history is connected by a prodigious stream of legends and myths never exceeded by any people of the earth, there appear preeminent, under *Tonatiuh*, the sun, and at a level with the chief deity of each tribe, the moon and Venus, *Tetzcatlipoca* and *Quetzal-coatl*; and while the pyramids of Teotihuacan and Chololan are the fundamental columns of the worship, the three stars are the summit of the Nahoas theogony. *Tlaloc*, god of the waters, to whom the high mountains were consecrated and whose great fetish was *Popocatepetl* itself and *Chalchiuhtlicue*, his wife, the fecund earth, the woman with the immense blue gown (*Ixtacihuatl*), held also a privileged place in the Toltec Pantheon.

(1) It must be borne in mind that the systematical destruction of all things apt to remind the old worship, practised by the Spanish missionaries and the death silence imposed on the few priests that outlived the conquest, has deprived us of the necessary documents to give a character of certainty to what now must remain conjectural. The very few original documents saved among the ruins of the temple, i.e. the religious culture of the ancient Nahoas and Mayas, cannot be read but only interpreted because they are nearly wholly ideographic, and interpretations yield only approximate truth. Post-cortesian chroniclers are mostly confusing employing different names for the same things or contradictory. Hence there arise unsurmountable difficulties to know exactly the elements of the great American civilisations.

Their cosmography and geogony were mixed up; the remembrance of great meteorological and plutonic phenomena seemed entwisted with the singular intuition of cosmical transformations: they believed, as science did up to more than the beginning of the present century, that a succession of total revolutions marked the divers stages of formation of the terrestrial crust; they called this succession the five periods or ages, or, as chronographers translated the term, the five suns; one sun or age of water; then the age of winds; thirdly the age of vulcanic eruptions or of fire; the fourth age is that of the earth, a true quaternary age of the Nahoas; at last, the historic or present age. All these cataclysms, according to the chronicles, had been witnessed by the human species. The autochthonous race of Anáhuac, that which could behold the valley of Mexico converted into an immense lake, that which beyond all doubt saw Ajusco in eruption, that which hunted the enormous pachyderms of the last geological age, the giants or quinames, would they not communicate their traditions to the founders of the pyramid sanctuaries of Teotihuacan and Cholula? Were it not the priests of those sanctuaries who transmitted to the Toltecs these notions already diffused over the immense area of the civilisation of the South?

After this geogony there came, in the succession of the creeds, the remembrance of the renovation of totemic or zoolatric worship of the Anáhuac sanctuaries whose centre was the holy town of Teotihuacan and of the consecration to the Sun and Moon of the pyramids which from that instant became Nahoa sanctuaries.

But amid the Nahoa priesthood vestiges are noticed of a schism, of a struggle between the deity of night, of shade, of death, of human sacrifice and the crepuscular deity ever dying and ever renascent from the gigantic pyre of the Sun, of Tetzcatlipoca and Quetzal-coatl, of the Moon and Venus. This schism, origin of bloody discords, was caused, to be sure, by the proscription of the anthropophagic rites and the reformation of calendar.

Science.—NUMERATION—ASTRONOMY—CHRONOGRAPHY—WRITING. The Toltecs being most active merchants and skilful builders, it is evident they knew how to account and had some primitive arithmetics comprising only the four rules, as is demonstrated by their pictures in which the signs, according to their position, are to be added to the fundamental one or multiply it. Their numeration, like that of all primitive tribes and as shown by the proper meaning of some of the names of these numbers, was based on reckoning by the fingers: the sum of the fingers and toes being twenty, twenty was the fundamental number of the Nahoa and Maya-Kiché numeration. By squaring the products of twenty they contrived to reckon up to 160,000 giving every product a special and expressive name. There cannot be any doubt they knew how to increase quantities up to their needs.

They applied their numeral system wonderfully to the computation of time. They had a religious calendar of their most numerous holidays (*tonalamatl*) that occupied all the year round; every holiday had its sacrifices, rites and idols; moreover there were many domestic festivals. The *tonalamatl* was a lunar calendar as were the first calendars of all the peoples on earth; it was composed of thirteen groups or months of twenty days. The priesthood that made use of this calendar was that of Tetzcatlipoca or the moon. Later on the base of the religious calendar was referred to the period of visibility of the twin star Quetzal-coatl, this reform bringing probably about the great religious struggle that marked the decadency of the Toltec

monarchy. It was in this epoch also that the religious year was increased by the one hundred and five days and a fourth that composed the civil year and thus became approximated to the astronomical year. This calendar, so like the Julian year, is one of the proofs adduced by our eminent master Orozco y Berra to support his hypothesis of the European origin of the apostle reformer Quetzal-coatl Topiltzin, the white and bearded priest attired in long cross-trimmed robes.

The definitive correction of the calendar made in the Aztec times, approximated it to the true astronomical year even more, according to the opinion of experts, than the common christian year.



Immanuel Orozco y Berra

The computing of time indicates remarkable astronomical knowledge: the Toltecs were aware of the apparent movement of the sun between the tropics and the solstitial points were the four ends of the cross of *nahui-ollin*. They had observed the motions of the moon and of Venus; the culmination of the *Pleiades* performed an important roll in the renewing of the fire in the maximum period of time, a cycle of 52 years or the double of it, 104 years, the *ajau-katun* of the Mayas. The two Bears, the Polar star, the Milky way, the Scorpion were familiar stars

for the priests and being deities continued in the sky the eternal drama represented on earth. Eclipses, comets, falling stars were observed passionately and superstitiously, the influence of stars on man being so clear and demonstrable that all the calendars may be said astrological, just as among the historic peoples of the old world.

Astrology led to witchcraft and magic and this to the knowledge of the effects of the juices of certain plants and other substances on the system, the first beginnings of therapeutics among those interesting tribes.

Writing, such as it is to be found in the few authentic works of the Toltecs and the heirs to their culture, hardly can be called so. It is a painting of objects to express ideas, it is an already conventional and shortened picture writing, it is an ideography; several of the signs, however, are undoubtedly phonographs and that indicates clearly that on the eve of the arrival of Cortés the transition from ideography to genuine writing was already going on.

Art and Industry. Social organisation.—The remnants of Toltec art at Tula, Teotihuacan, Cholula, etc., give evidence of the prodigious (without hyperbole) aptitudes of this Indian group. Their building materials, stone, lava, brick, clay, used simultaneously, allowed them to shape all the symbolic or aesthetic and useful forms their imagination conceived. Temples, palaces, tombs, playing grounds (chiefly ball), all have left outlines, foundations, fragments of walls, columns, pillars, wakes. The sculptural decoration of their edifices, relievos, altars, statues, all of them show singular faculties in these spontaneous cultures. Their gods, represented with deformed masks and the nice little heads of Teotihuacan, probably *ex-cotos*, are the extremes of an artistic chain not yet studied, but which amazes; the stucco, the colours, the frescos employed in the interior of the palaces and tombs, and all that has been allowed to be destroyed and can be guessed; the pottery of manifold forms and decorated and painted with an extraordinary richness of fancy, are like fragments of an immense book that falls asunder before our eyes telling us how they lived, how they felt, of what they thought among that group anxious to reveal a bit of its religion, its history, its soul, its life in whatsoever work brought forth by their hands.

The unimaginable multitude of objects that, in fragments or in dust, form as it were the pavement of Anáhuac and the districts where the civilisation of the South was flourishing, suffices to make us aware that around the large



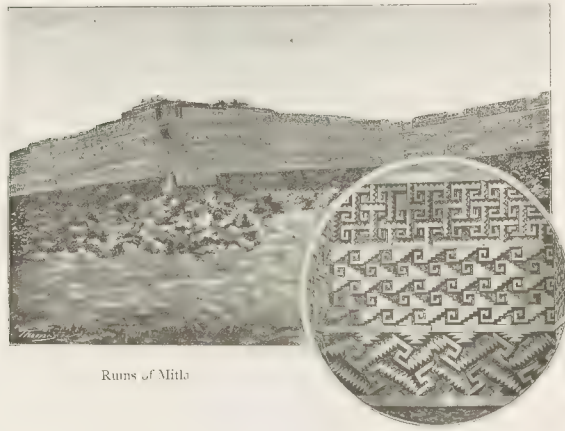
Objects of Nahuatl pottery

Toltec centres population was dense as it was in the Maya and Kiché countries where it appeared there was not a yard of land not cultivated or otherwise made productive; it is enough to know, by traditions or by vestiges, the works of industry of those who with cotton, coloured threads, feathers, gold and silver manufactured the nice things that rendered the name of Toltec synonymous with ingenious artificer, to guess the social organisation of those people; farmers to cultivate the land for the lords and the priests if they were serfs; if not so, tilling the ground whose collective owners they were, as in the Russian *mir*, dealing out the produce proportionally, under the oversight of the chieftain or cazique, reserving one part to God and an other to the *master*; artisans united in guilds in which the manufacturing receipts were transmitted secretly from master to apprentice. And this social organisation reveals habits of order, obedience and regularity of customs that constituted an unwritten code of justice and moral, powerfully sanctioned by creed and fear of punishment in this life and the other.

This, again, is a certain indication of the preponderance of the priests, as is also the magnitude of the works performed in building towns, citadels, monuments nearly all of them erected on mounds, denouncing divine pressure, theocratic despotism exercised on thousands of human beings hardly clad and fed, i.e. of very few and never changing needs. Prayers, sacrifices, moral precepts, respectfulness for civil and religious wedlock, family and authority

were the foundation of the intimate life of these Nahoas according to the chroniclers who wrote fancifully about this matter and according to the remnants of poetry and wild narrations that may be disentangled from these adulterated records; all this only serves to confirm what may be inferred from the mere aspect and variety of the objects.

This Toltec civilisation is the same as that which among the Acolhuans and Aztecs, their heirs, flourished at the time of the conquest; it is that which penetrating into the civilisation of the South transformed it leaving therein its stamp from Mitla to Chichen. Ay! When speaking of the Mayas we already said: If, indeed, that civiliser Quetzal-coatl had been a European man, bringing the Toltecs as a faith: «God is good, man is sacred to man; woman represents on earth Nature's divine function;» if he had brought them writing, if he had taught



Ruins of Mitla

them the use of iron, the Toltecs would have maintained their dominion over the tableland and Cortés would have met with an indomitable people. The conquest would not have been an atrocious struggle, but a transaction, a covenant, a supreme benefit, without oppression and without bloodshed.

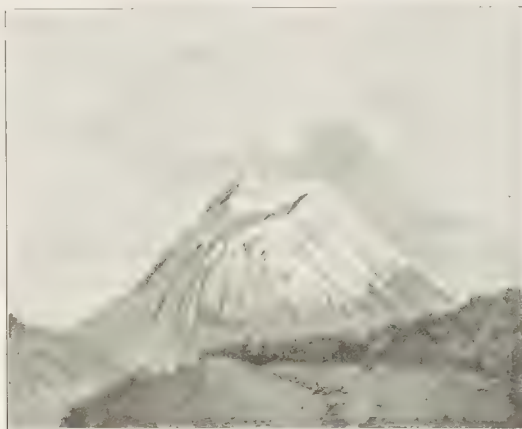
End of the Toltec empire.—There is nothing actually indicative that among

the Toltecs and Colhuans, their congeners, also dwelling in Tol-lan, the worship exacting bloody, human sacrifices did not prevail; all seems to confirm the asseveration of the chroniclers that the pontiff-king Topiltzin Quetzal-coatl, as we stated above, suspended the rites, and probably dissolved the priesthood, of Tetzcatlipoca; these priests roused the popular feeling, stirred the Nahoas and Meca groups who still continued in a state of barbarity, being troglodytes or living in *kraals*, hardly organised and still anthropophagi, believing the human victim was converted into a protecting deity and so they made gods; with these auxiliaries comprised under the generic name of *Chichimecs*, the Colhua tribe and the disestablished priests undertook the struggle against the reformer. It lasted long years, the relation of the chronicles being utterly confused; several times Quetzal-coatl, vanquished, fugitive and killed, revives by himself, this seeming to point out that the worship of Venus several times overpowered that of ferocious Tetzcatlipoca; meanwhile the tribes consumed their energies in these religious wars and their individuals floating between the hostile worships, forsaking their fields kept desolated and barren by the unceasing invasions of the nomads, slowly begun to emigrate towards the southern valleys of the tableland, that of the lakes (to-day Mexico), that of Puebla and of Oaxaca; or following the outline of the coast of the Gulf penetrated into the Isthmus and spread over Chiapas and Guatemala or settled in Tabasco and Yucatan.

A legend stated by the chroniclers tells us the *octli* or pulque invented by the *meshi* wandering over those countries (*metl-maguey* is the radical of *meshi*) was of no little influence in that sad decay; it is still so: that regional beverage of Anáhuac, amidst other causes, has kept the indigenous group far from civilisation.

It was not difficult to dismember the Toltec empire, all things indicating Tol-lan exercised only an hegemonic power in a sort of confederacy of feudal lords and sanctuaries such as Teotihuacan and Chololan; the religious struggles whose consequence was the intervention of the nomad tribes that had pursued the Toltecs from Tlapalan to Tlapalan before their arrival in Anáhuac, continued thus their secular work.

The chronicles relate that when the pontiff-king fleeing from his capital, established his residence at Chololan, that small priest city became a perfectly planned and organised town whither the faithful partisans of the dethroned sovereign repaired after one another and followed by their families; probably even the Teotihuacan priests at last rallied around him and perhaps it is from this epoch the abandonment of the great hieropolis dates where we still find the signs of a singular procedure consisting in stopping the sanctuaries with walls and interring the sacerdotal abodes under small mounds. May be this happened during the ferocious war the tribes triumphant in Tol-lan waged against Chololan and its illustrious guest.



Citlaltepetl (Peak of Orizaba)

So it actually happened; Chololtecan Tol-lan was looked at by Huemac, pontiff-king himself and incarnation of Tetzcatlipoca, as a challenge and a threatening and above all as an impiety; so he made war against the flourishing country; the prophet fled towards the Gulf wherein he disappeared being transformed into the star Venus which the Chololtecan saw shining over the crystal summit of the Orizaba (Citlaltepetl, mountain of the star) as a promise and a hope. Many fled, others remained and probably compromised with the man sacrificers; indeed, we can imagine human sacrifice, considered till then as an offer to the gods and at the same time as the creation of a new deity (for such a power was attributed to the spirit of the propitiatory host), became, under the influence of the Quetzal-coatl priests, a sort of communion with the deity itself to whom the sacrifice was offered and who partook of the sacred banquet in union with its adorers, identifying with them and thus this ritual custom, offensive and atrocious as no other, was inspired by the same craving that moved the eucharistic agapae of the pristine christian communities.

The fact is that such was the meaning the Aztecs, according to the chroniclers, seemed

to attribute to the sacrifice and that, when Quetzal-coatl himself fleeing from Chololan, or one of the religious colonies sent out by him to those regions, led by Guk-umátz and Kukul-kan, made their appearance among the Kichés and Mayas, not being able to suppress the anthropophagous rites, gave them the sacramental character they afterwards had in Tenochtitlan.

We already stated how fecund the contact of the Lucifer priesthood with the Maya-Kiché groups was; if the inscriptions were to speak, they would reveal us clearly wherein the transformation consisted; sciences, arts, religion, customs, political organisation, all seems to have entered a new period since the Toltecs settled on the banks of the Usumacinta, near the well of the Itzaes (Chichen-Itzá) or around the artificial lagoons of Uxmal; only the transformation brought on by the presence of the Spaniards surpassed this one achieved during the x and xi centuries.

Huemac, the conqueror of Chololan, was by his turn soon compelled to give up the great Toltec capital; his empire was undone; some groups remained settled on the lands of the valley of Mexico, such as Chapoltepetl or Colhuacan; others blended with the Tlascaltecas and Hueshotzincas, others emigrated in search of their brethren of Tabasco and Guatemala; it was as if the Supreme Sower spread over all the Mexican ambits the seed of the precursory civilisation.

The rocks of the mountains and canyons of the S.O. of the United States conserve plenty of tracks of troglodytic dwellings; those barren and desolated countries were formerly watered and wooded; woods, waters and villages have vanished leaving nearly pulverised towns in the basins of the Gila, the Colorado, the upper Bravo, and abodes in the rocks and caverns in sites often nearly inaccessible; hunting and river fishing were the only occupation of those now extinct groups, their only care being to defend themselves against the nomads who in endless streams passed and repassed, laying waste and scaring away all living beings on their hurried march towards South. These never ending barbarous invasions determine the whole dynamism of precortesian history. We saw how the *mound-builders* fleeing from the nomads, by successive emigrations peopled the coasts of the Gulf and perhaps of the Caribbean sea; we saw how the natives of Anáhuac and Isthmian and peninsular Mexico either mingled with the new comers losing their personality or withdrew into the rugged mountain ranges of the Orient and the Occident; we saw how the tribes after one another came upon the tableland following the coasts of the Pacific, cutting their path through the Mecas (the aborigines of the Occident) and crossing the central plateau in various directions. Thus all is migration in our primitive history, all is movement prolonging its ethnic waves from the heart of the United States to the isthmus of Panamá. The ruin of the Toltec empire was undoubtedly due to the largest and most energetic of these waves; strange to say, after long years of wandering, lighting on the cities organised definitively by the Toltecs, the barbarous chieftains of the Chichimecs or a series of leaders of the chief group wearing the same name *Xolotl*, settle at length, submitting the conquered peoples to tribute and establishing a curious troglodyte empire wherein the cities or at least the principal centre is established in a cavernous region of the mountains surrounding the valley of Mexico and the palaces are grotts like the abodes of the *cliff-dwellers*, congeners of the Chichimeca tribes.

These troglodyte huntsmen, without idols, without any other worship than rustic sacri-

fices to the deities of the Sun and Earth, the chroniclers say, began gradually to leave their caverns, joining in huts, settling in villages, learning from the Toltec groups how to cultivate the maize and the cotton plant, dressing, becoming sedentary, giving up their rough tongue for the cultured language of the Nahoas tribes, adopting the gods of these tribes, in one word, becoming civilised. It is most interesting to extract the substance out of the labyrinth of narrations by which every one of the ancient lordships of Anáhuac tried to establish their territorial rights after the Spanish Conquest relating their origins, and to recognise therein the labour of the barbarous groups striving to assimilate a foreign culture and to become converted into Toltecs; the intervention of the refined priesthood of that great tribe (legend of priest Teepoyotl) in the education of the Chichimec princes, the influence of the Nahoas in determining the barbarians to devote themselves to the cultivation of the land (legend of the resurrection of maize), the advent of exotic tribes of Nahoas origin such as the *Acolhuans* who assimilated deeply the Toltec culture and with whom identified select portions of the Chichimecs who gave their empire the name



The god Quetzal-coatl adored at Tol-lan

of *Acolhuacan* and settled their capital on the banks of the Salted lake at the old restored Toltec town of *Teshcoco*, all these are the heroic or tragic or romantic chapters of this dark history which comes to an end with the grand epopees of the resistance a great many of the barbarians opposed to civilisation; we may add thereto the record of bloody struggles and the definitive victory of the cultured groups united for the defence of their new penates, the secession of those refractory to progress and their fusion on the inaccessible crags of the mountains with the aboriginal Otomis.

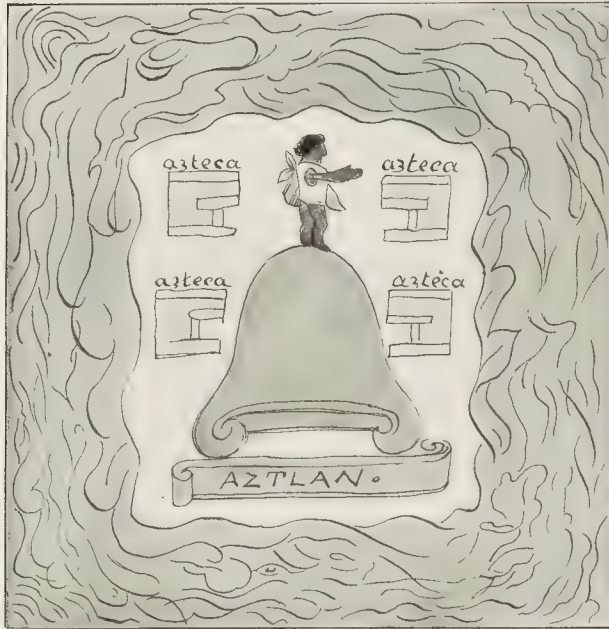
Among these ill united lordships of the Acolhuan feudal empire, some day after the great battles for life of the civilisation, there rises an entity, also on the borders of the lake, which almost succeeded in absorbing and subduing the whole empire: the seigniory of the Tecpanecs in Atzacapotzalco headed by caziques or Kings of ferocious energy contrived to subjugate the whole Valley and if it were not for the presence of the Meshi and their union with the Acolhuans, Cortés would have met with a Tecpanec empire in Anáhuac instead of an Aztec dominion.

The Meshi.—If in history; generally speaking, analogies and parallelisms were something more than mere literary lucubrations, one might be tempted to evidence in these Mexican regions, something like a compendium of the distribution of the nations of the Old World in ancient history; one would set face to face the history of the oriental peoples and that of the Maya-Kichés, the Toltecs would represent the Hellenes of precortesian America, whilst the Aztecs or Meshi, under the authority of coincidences ingeniously sought and marshalled, would perform the roll of the Romans.

Forbearing such easy rhetorical exercises we are going to give a brief account of the

vital evolution of the Aztec group that owed to force the privilege of incarnating before History the souls of other peoples of higher intellectual and moral worth than itself.

Some chroniclers group under the name of the *seven Nahuatlac tribes* several of the clans which afterwards flourished in the Valley, and even beside it, speaking Naho; this denomination is an arbitrary one: the Tlascaltecs, for instance, are Chichimecs (the Teochichimecs), emigrants from the Valley and



Aztlán. Codex Aubin

conquerors of the Toltec population from which they received their name and got their civilisation becoming *nahoalised*. The truth is that several Naho families slipping from North towards South, perhaps from the river basins now at the North of our boundaries, descended along the Pacific slopes and fleeing before the nomad agglomerations that were forming movable deposits, human downs as it were, on the central and northern plateaus, of the large Mexican tableland, went up to the hight of the Anáhuac valleys, following nearly an identical itinerary; they left their path bestrewed with belated groups that even now form in the geography of the vernacular languages a current marking with vivid tokens the former passage of the Nahoas. The last of the tribes taking part in that secular exodus, according to the assertion of the chroniclers, was that of the Aztecs, the people of Aztlán, the heron lake, situated at the Sinaloan coast, according to the opinion of Chavero; they

wandered in slow stages through the West and met with the Tarascan groups that possessed a peculiar culture. Sacramentary sacrifices had the same rites, an identical ceremonial among all the cultured tribes of present Mexico, as well among the Nahoas as among the Tarascans and the Maya-Kichés, clearly indicating a common origin and this origin is Toltecan, is almost the mark of Toltecan influence over the whole isthmian region; these singular people found the transition between the cannibalism of the hungry tribes and religious anthropophagy in which the slave and prisoner sacrificed and communicated, this is the word, united man with divinity, for this was a progress beyond mere cannibalism; those who adopted the sanguinary rite celebrated the offensive banquet only on determinate holidays and never else and so it remained reduced.

The Aztecs became acquainted with these religious practices in Michoacan; thence they took them and there they gave their principal deity, this being the spirit of the ancestor warrior of the tribe, the name of humming bird (*Huitzilipochtli*), the characteristic bird of the Tarascan districts that had given its name onomatopoeically to the capital itself of the Kingdom situated on the banks of the *Pátzcuaro*, *Tzintzontzan*. A caste of priests, a group of rites and religious legends, the first form of history, such was the moral luggage, so to say, with which the Aztec tribes came out of the Tarascan region. Being lacustral people they had come wandering from lake to lake, from *Aztlan* to *Chapalan*, thence to *Pátzcuaro* and *Cuitzeo*, and at length to the lagoons of the valley of Mexico. Around them the Aztecs peregrinated unceasingly from the beginning of the x century to the beginning of the xiv. Coming from a region where the American agave, maguey, or metl in Nahoas, abounds the transmigrants, when they met in the Valley with a spot teeming with this plant they deemed divine, the name of their primitive god being derived from it, stopped and stayed and either invented or propagated the use of the fermented juice of the metl that renders men happy because it makes them valorous: since then they were known by the name of *meshi* or *Meshicans*. The Toltecs unhappily became acquainted with, and fond of, the Meshican invention which, the legends seem to tell us, contributed largely to keep up discord among their and to accelerate their ruin. The destruction of the Toltecan empire in which the Meshicans took part, was doubtlessly a conjuncture inducing them to try to settle definitively by the side of the lake turning to account the general disarray. They did not succeed; cast from the formidable rock of *Chapoltepetl* by the coalition of the petty kings of the Valley, submitted to slavery by the *Colhuans* and emancipated finally owing to their fierceness and the general hatred inspired by the ferocity of their rites, they were allowed to settle amid the lake itself; they distributed themselves over the two principal islets, built with mud and reeds their miserable fisher cabins, erected a temple, a *teocalli*, to their patron gods and obeyed blindly the advice of their guide and oracle *Tenoch*; the small and wretched insular villages were *Tlaltelolco* and the largest of them *Tenochtitlan*. (Out of the phonograph of *Tenochtunal* on a rock there derived in the course of time the legend about the eagle and the nopal whence the present escutcheon of the Mexican nation arose.) The town founded by *Tenoch* and ruled by him and his descendants for some time, as soon as it became perceptible to the shore people of the lake, was obliged to pay a tribute to the *Tecpanecatll* of *Atzacapotzalco* and to contribute to the wars this bellicose lord was constantly waging.

The Meshi changed their government converting their theocracy into a sort of elective monarchy and came to contract an alliance with the Acolhuan kings deprived of a good deal of their territory by the Tecpanecan lord; this alliance at the beginning was fatal for them and several of the lords of Tenochtitlan died in captivity; but they were not dismayed and after some time the Meshi and their allies, the Tesheco Acolhuans, succeeded in conquering the Tecpanecans, killing their indomitable monarch and reducing the seignior of Atzacapotzalco to vassalage; it is from that time the Aztec empire dates.

The intermediaries between the two great civilisations.—Our country is bestrewn with superb monuments whose authors are unknown to us; such are the ruined edifices that exist in the neighbourhood of Zacatecas (the Burned) in which some chroniclers surmise one of the large stays of the ambulant Nahuatlacan tribes, perhaps the legendary Chico-



Foundation of Mexico. (Hieroglyph of Durán)

moshtoc; such those of Shochicalco which some authors think a work of the constructors of the South and which are more likely of Toltec origin. In the present States of Oaxaca and Michoacan we must look for the primordial foci of two civilisations that, beyond all doubt, are a mix-

ture of three elements, the aboriginal one and two adventitious ones, the Maya-Kiché and the Nahoan civilisations.

The Michoacan people (Tarascans) did not build up a monumental civilisation; their monument is their language showing quite a distinct aspect from the Nahoan or isthmian languages, so much so that some of the present descendants imagined they had discovered some signs of affinity with the Inca tongue; the linguistic area of the Tarascans extended over a part of Querétaro and Guanajuato. The Tarascan capital had its site on the shores of the picturesque lagoon of Pátzcuaro; their social (especially industrial) organisation was very ingenious and their political constitution was a rather theocratical monarchy as was that of most of the cultured tribes of these regions. As we have stated before, their rites were ferocious and their legends dramatic and most interesting. The Tarascans were so warlike that they always vanquished the Meshicans; nevertheless they did not oppose any resistance to the Spaniards; the fate of Tenochtitlan, their hereditary enemy, plunged them into that stupefying awe which stuns all sense of honour and patriotism.

The Tzapotecs in the Oaxacan mountains, however, had a monumental culture; many of their ruins have been described, much has been talked about the remnants of their most ingenious fortifications, of their industries, of their exquisite way to work metals, such as

gold, with a truly artistic taste, and of their magnific buildings in a dying state or rather dead already and their residues in a state of dissolution.

Some authors consider the Tzapotecs and the Mishtecs, their congeners, to be of the same family with the Maya-Kichés; others suppose them to be Nahoas of the first immigration, Proto-Nahoas, as there were Proto-Hellenes or Pelasgians; the truth is that the Tzapotecan countries were the theatre of the total fusion of the isthmian elements of the cultured populations of America before the Conquest. The sacerdotal city of Mitla, the city of death, contains in the vestiges of its architectural wonders the proof of this truth.

To sum up, this country looked upon the growth of two great spontaneous civilisations, that of the Nahuas and that of the Maya-Kichés; besides, a few others indicate a conscious evolution, a continuous effort, a stupendous (we may say so without hyperbole) mass of faculties slowly wasted in a period that began before the Conquest and continued after that event.

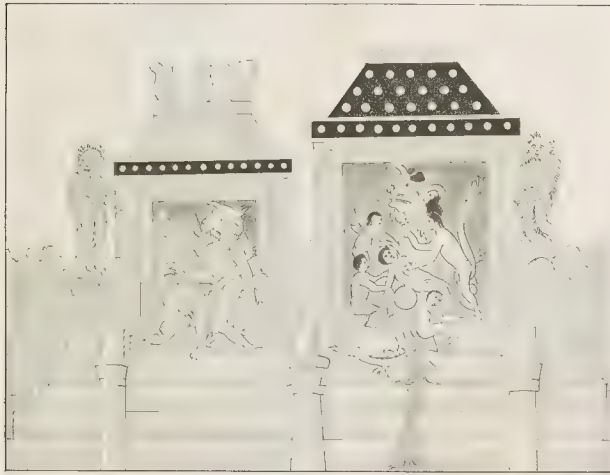
The Tecpanecan yoke having been shaken off, and the alliance celebrated between the conquerors who shared the spoils of the vanquished dominion, the empire of the Meshicans began its great final period. In its course two figures stand out like giants, that of the first Motecuhzoma and that of Netzahualcoyotl; the former a superior product of a warlike and active race above all others; the latter the last and best fruit of the Toltec culture. What has been called, not without some reason, «the Aztec empire» had no time to consolidate its domination, nor would this have been so extensive as might be supposed considering the wide tract over which he extended his victories (from the basins of the Pánuco and the Lerma down to Guatemala), because in the centre itself of the Mexican dominion the Aztecs had ever irreconcilable foes, their only means of conquest being terror and blood.

Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina was the soul of the war for independence and the destruction of the domination of Atzacotzaleco; it was he who submitted to tribute and vassalage the tribes of the Valley, many of them being fierce and untamable; he subdued the Huastecs of the basin of the Pánuco and stuck the victorious insignia of Huitzilipochtli on the shores of the Gulf from Tochpan to Coatzacoalco; even into the present States of Oaxaca, Guerrero and Morelos his armies penetrated spreading fright by destroying the temples, setting the houses on fire, slaying all invalid people, mowing down the green crops and taking hundreds of captives who were to serve as sacred victims on the endless death feasts of the old gods of the tribe; in order to secure his conquest he bestrewed the subjugated countries with colonies some of which are flourishing towns to-day.

Vicar of god and worshipped like a god Ilhuicamina shines in history not only as a conqueror but also as supreme sacrificant and his great warrior figure becomes awful when in the dedication of the temple of Huitzilipochtli it appears on the summit of the great teocali, standing upright before the frightened crowd, surrounded by the sacrificers, anointed in black, attired in rich mantles and jewelry, crowned with eagle feathers and holding in his uplifted right hand the fuming obsidian knife of the tragic Mexican rites. His piety stimulated him unceasingly to build temples, to appease with human blood the angry gods keeping them cloyed and satisfied, loath to vent their anger on the faithful people. The ancient Toltec gods became Mexican deities, having all of them their own temples, dreaded

Quetzal-coatl converted into a god of winds and prophecies as well as sanguinary Tezcatlipoca and while the melancholic king of Teshcoco erected a huge pyramid to the honour of a nameless god, the Meshicans raised a teocali to all the gods, a singular example of syncretism without analogy but for the Romans.

The gods had dropped countless calamities upon Tenochtitlan and through overflows, droughts and dearths succeeding year by year the empire was on the point to dissolve like a heap of clay in the waters of the lake; all was obviated with amazing activity by the Meshican *tecuhlti*; aided by the wise lord of Teshcoco he undertook the terrible struggle with the water and the mud indispensable to fulfil the divine commandment and to transform the islet of the tunal into a gigantic town that was to unite its artificial ground with



Teocali

the mainland; this struggle is still lasting; the enterprise initiated by the Tenochcans was like an abyss that could not be filled up but throwing in the fortune and health of many a generation.

However, Tenochtitlan rose again from its disasters, around its teocalis and on the banks of its four cardinal causeways centred in the bloody altar of the god of the queen-tribe and

parting the field which the town was going to win from the lake. These works reveal a powerful social organisation: below, a priest-ridden people so utterly entangled in the infinite net of the practices of a superstitious devotion to become a slave of the gods who disposed of the labour, the produce of the labour, the property and the life of those human groups (all the tribes of Anáhuac when becoming sedentary adopted the same organisation): where we say *gods*, *priests* are to be understood. Such was the foundation of the social state; communal ownership of the land, monogamic marriage, without any prohibition of extraritual polygamy, mutual duties of assistance and piety between parents and children, utterly positive and sensible moral maxims, indicative of a most remarkable degree of sociability, respect for old people, an inflexible tutelage over woman-kind (not excluding a certain respectfulness), terrible punishments for an unfaithful wife, all this was dominated by a deep sentiment of religious fear; there was nothing more fearful than those gods and goddesses of frightful faces, never satiated of human flesh and blood and who waited for the traveller from earth to eternity on the bridge of death to torture him if he had not obeyed and to let him go

towards the Sun if he had died fulfilling the holy precepts or on the battle field or upon the stone of the ordinary sacrifice or in the heroic struggle of the gladiatory sacrifice.

The priests were bred in special seminaries always crowded with pupils in order to dispose of a staff in perpetual activity attending to punctuality in the celebration of the holidays inscribed on the religious calendar, looking after those to be kept in the *shacalis* (primitive Mexican hut) still in use and of which a sample was preserved in every large clay or stone house, in its principal court yard decked with flowers and adornings during the holidays; taking care of the festivals celebrated in the houses of gentlefolk and directing those which it was the custom to celebrate accompanied with bloody sacrifices in the *teocalis* and the halls that surrounded them.

Religion and war, the latter depending on the former almost as its unfailing consequence, were the vital poles of the empire of Motecuhzoma the First. In a, likewise special, college the young nobleman was educated for war; it was a sort of *ephebia* like that of Athens whence the flower of warriors started for the battle field and sometimes the princes of the royal family for the throne. When the empire was organised on the basis of the triple alliance, the neighbouring clans knew it would be irresistible; in order to maintain their independence they agreed on a pact probably single in human history: by common accord there were to be periodical wars between the triple alliance and the clans of Tlascalala, Hueshotzineo, Atlisheco, etc., (constituted into a sort of oligarchic republics), with the sole aim to procure captives for the sacrifices; and as the Meshicans, the more their power and territorial greatness increased the more heavily felt weighing on themselves the direful obligation to feed the Sun, as they said, the other tribes submitted to the same custom that detained the progress of those civilisations toward a superior hight in the ascension initiated by the Toltecs; the eagle of the nopal of Tenoch was unable to fly, unable to soar above the bloodreeking and moanful ambient condensed around himself by voracious Huitzili-pochtli.

But for this, but for the anguish caused everywhere by the sound of the warshell of the Aztec sovereign or the rolling of his gold drum, the inborn qualities of that most active tribe would have increased pausingly; Aztec merchants were incessantly going and coming throughout the whole empire being the precursors of conquests and colonies; bred systematically at home to be slaves of the gods, to be able to walk without resting all daylong, always to carry a load on their shoulders (an indispensable thing in a country where unfortunately there were no beasts of burden), accustomed to absolute sobriety, the Aztecs crossed the upper plateaus of the tableland in every direction, proposing barter and exchanges, making their appearance in the *tianguis*, observing all things to relate them afterwards at Tenochtitlan and Teshcoco; they descended the stairs of the gigantic slopes of the Oceans and passed over the coasts and the Shicalanco, into the river regions where the gigantic ruins were lying they looked at with surprise; and from Tabasco and Chiapas they proceeded eastward towards Yucatan where the Meshicans had supported bravely the tyranny of the Cocomes up to the destruction of Mayapan; southward they descended as far as Guatemala. Owing to a policy unremittently pursued by all the Meshican kings, every time a merchant met with obstacles opposed to his trade by a foreign lord, they reclaimed and supported their reclamations by force of arms; so it happened that led by the first Motecuhzoma, the

imperial hosts penetrated on the shores of the Gulf and into the valley of Oaxaca and his successors led them triumphantly as far as Shoconochco and Guatemala.

After one of these expeditions which like those of the Egyptians were actual *razzias* undertaken to bring captives to Tenochtitlan and to impose tributes, the empire seemed to have retired its limits; but it had never time to consolidate them.

A contemporary of Motecuhzoma was Netzahualcoyotl whom the chroniclers, interpreting

perhaps some traditions to make them subservient to their idea that the empires of Anáhuac were something like the biblical tribes, show us as a David: a warrior founder of a kingdom, a sinner weeping over his faults, an erotic surrounded by beautiful women even in his old age, a sensual and melancholy poet, inquiet, tired, anxious of truth like a *dilettante* of our own days or of the decadence of the Roman empire. These kings of Teshcoco, Netzahualcoyotl—David and Netzahualpili—Salomon mingled in all the episodes of the life of Tenochtitlan as if they wished to escape annoyances: they saved the town from the inundations, directed the construction of the aqueducts to convey drinking water to the large capital, formed part of the college of electors that at



Bath of Netzahualcoyotl

the death of every king designated his successor among the princes of the royal family; were the chief ornament of the coronation festivals; performing necessarily the hateful roll of sacrificers, composed the official harangue to hail the new enthroned monarch, accompanied him in the florid wars and in the others when they were called upon and returning thereafter to their own dominions they shut themselves up in the interior of their seraglios surrounded with splendid gardens whose delicious relics are still extant. In company with their scholars and augurs they studied the sky to know the destiny and the plants to find the wonderful rejuvenising elixir; this refinement of the aptitudes of the Teshcocan princes

to better the legacy of the Toltecs would have placed them at the head of the evolution rendered abortive and frustaneous by the frightful superstition of the Aztecs.

From time to time a new temple arose; every new monarch wanted his own, as the pharaohs did and then the slave people and the captives, without receiving any wages, concurred in large crowds to the work of the chieftains; not having any other mechanical implement than the most delicate and admirably articulated lever named man, to him they had recourse and with him, by dint of multiplying him and making him suffer they obtained those colossal works which amazed the Spaniards and which where they were made with stone have left large vestiges; not in the capital of Anáhuac where the main material was clay covered with stone or not, but nearly always decayed and returned to the moist and muddy ground whence it had come.

The successors of Ihuicamina followed his footsteps exaggerating as imperial power was increasing the enterprises of the cruel and heroical warrior. The tributary territory increased more and more; not that the Meshicans gained victory after victory; sometimes the perpetual foes of the empire such as the Tarascans for instance inflicted them painful corrections; but they either persisted with indomitable obstinacy or steered other courses, war continuing for ever; it was the normal state of the empire; it had not yet come out of this period when it was undone. The town was growing larger, the houses, gardens, aqueducts, temples were multiplied; the immense dwellings of raw bricks decked with pictures of rough colours ingenuously combined which served as abodes for noblemen and kings, were more and more luxurious; products of art of the tributary countries were gathered in greater quantity and more frequently the sounds of the *teponaztli* and of the *huehuetl* were to be heard, which could be considered musical instruments only when accompanying voluptuous or sad songs, which constituted some sort of ingenuous and melancholy love poetry, some echos of which have come down to us.

The worship of the gods reached enormous proportions; two or three coincidences of the human hecatombs in the temples and the end of some calamity increased to such a degree the prestige of the anthropophagous deities that the sacrifices became slaughters of whole peoples of captives dyeing with blood the town and its inhabitants (1) giving rise to a stinking vapor of blood. It became necessary that this religious delirium should finish; blessed be the cross or the sword that marked the end of the bloody rites.

The priests, guardians of the astrological traditions of the Toltecs, had symbolical idols and chronographic stones sculptured, among which the most striking is the admirable engraved disk correctly called by Chavero «Stone of the Sun» which, between the central mask representative of that star, and the double star and a Quetzal-coatl engraved on the brim, includes and epitomises the chronometrical and cosmological systems of the heirs of the Toltecs with such a precision that it may be said there is no other equal to it among those which were the work of isolated nations, such as the primitive Egyptians, Chaldeans and Chinese.

It was a splendid culmination: those who have denied it against the testimony of the

(1) Orozco states at 20,000 the number of victims slaughtered on one day under the auspices of Ahuizotl.

monuments and of the conquerors themselves, did so because they compared that tradition with the present state of the aboriginal community and obstinately imagine, Tenochtitlan was a crowding of jackals around a nucleus of raw brick houses at the foot of an earth pyramid continually reddened with blood; there was something of this, but beyond all doubt there was a good deal more; but think that from amid those jackals the groups of merchants started who prepared the vassalage of the tableland and of the coasts; from those houses the group of chieftains came forth who carried the victorious ensigns of the Meshicans as



Motecuhzoma

far as Guatemala and that on the summit of the blood stained teocali the Stone of the Sun was shining under its red varnish. It was a splendid culmination: the xvi century was at its beginning; Netzahualpili was reigning with wisdom at Teshcoco; the young Meshican sovereigns, successors of Ilhuicamina, Ashayacatl, Titzoc and Ahuizotl had conquered, affirmed and sacrificed thousands of times on the central teocali rebuilt incessantly on an ever increasing scale. They had been succeeded by Motecuhzoma II, a royal priest, a favourite of Huitzilipochtli. The empire obeyed shuddering with wrath and fear; the eternal foes seemed to spy the hour when the giant would fall down, ready to dispute the prey; the barbarous Chichimecs hidden under the crags of the mountains like gigantic bats of the tablelands, or wandering as nomad groups over the northern plateau, from the Lerma and Pánuco up to the Bravo and Colorado; the retired and indomitable Tarascans, the illsub-

dued groups of the Huastecan and Zempoaltecan mountains and above all the warlike and well organised Tlascaltecs who on their territory admirably well disposed for defence granted refuge and shelter to all the enemies of the empire, seemed to forecast that the hour of downfall was drawing near and made themselves ready for the foreboded banquet.

Pontiff and emperor, Motecuhzoma had done as his forefathers did; however, being more conscious of his divine character, his tyranny weighed more heavily. In his hands accustomed to the obsidian knife of the sacrificant and the fumigatory of copali, the military empire founded by Ishcoatl and the first Motecuhzoma became once more a theocracy; the people bent their heads deeper in servitude, the noble, from fierce war companions of the monarch became his humble domestics who served him and put him into the coloured gold hammock in which he made his travels for recreation or war; a complicated ceremonial held

aloof from simple mortals the young human god who absconded into the innermost recesses of his palaces, his serraglio, his sacerdotal shrine or allowed himself to be looked at by the prostrate people surrounded with barbarous sumptuousity. «I hardly ever saw his face» told a noble Aztec one of the Spanish missionaries.

That priest was an initiated one: he knew that the god of prophecies, Quetzal-coatl, had foretold his own return or that of his followers, white and bearded men, bearers of crosses, who would come from Orient; and the victories won in the *florid war* and those marking his passage through the outer frontiers of the empire were not sufficient to quiet the Meshican sovereign's mind; his subjects also knew those announcements; it was some time the Spaniards stood in an interrupted but certain contact with the tributary peoples of the empire. These news, in form of rumour, reached Tenochtitlan and Teshcoco and old Netzahualpili had been able probably to obtain exact news about the ephemorous passage over our coasts of the Spanish expeditions; so it was that all the meteorological, seismic and cosmic phenomena received the same interpretation: zodiac light announced ruin, the comet of 1515 announced ruin, even the dead resuscitated to announce it. (Afterwards the chroniclers posterior to the Conquest gave these presages a literary and religious form). Motecuhzoma now sank in the melancholy certainty of the truth of the forebodings, now ordered slaughters of divines or more valorously consolidated the prestige of his empire by bloody wars with Tlascalala and the free seigniories or planned their unification by absorbing the dominions of Teshcoco and Tlacopa. But his pride increased and the voracity of the gods augmented and the hatred of the tributaries against the empire constituted the most ill foreboding of all presages.



Cozumel

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST

PRECURSORS OF CORTÉS. FERDINAND CORTÉS AND THE TRIBUTARIES OF THE EMPIRE;
THE CONQUEROR AND MOTEULHOMA. CORTÉS THREATENED BY SPANIARDS AND MESHICANS;
HE VANQUISHES THE FORMER AND IS VANQUISHED BY THE LATTER.
SIEGE OF TENOCHITILAN; EMPEROR CUAUHEMOC

IN the history of Mexico «The Conquest» means the period of the struggle with the empire of the Meshicans; the conquest itself lasted longer and with the imperfect task of colonisation and pacification fills up the whole XVI century. But, to be sure, the work of Cortés was fundamental; the bold enterprise of that adventurous captain without a commission or legal authority once successfully achieved, all the remainder was but a consequence; the denomination proves well chosen.

The mass of energy deposited on the bottom of the Spanish character during several centuries of battle and adventure could not be transmuted into agricultural or industrial work, into toils of modest lucre; the exertion spent therein left an enormous surplus without employment, lost the magic spell of the unexpected, of the risk eluded with the aid of God

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FERDINAND CORTÉS



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and the sword, of the premium surprising the victorious struggler. Those hound men, of unbounded but heroic covetousness, who had lived in a continuous epopee, who had con-naturalised themselves with the belief in the incessant miracle, in the Spain of the day after Granada, checked with the iron curbs of order and safety by the firm hands of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand, received the news of the discovery of Columbus as a providential reward for their diligence on behalf of the Cross, as the supreme miracle marking the course of Spain's prodigious destinies, opening a field where all might be satiated: the thirst for lucre, the passion for adventure, the infinite longings for the unknown and the surprising that gave their perennial dreams indeterminate and gigantic outlines. The special type of the xvi century decomposed by the analysis of Cervantes in two elements, Don Quixote and Sancho, became recomposed in the better part of these arrogant and lofty adventurers; under the clashing of circumstances one of those men might become either a corsair or the founder of a kingdom. Only the gold fever of the assailants of California in the epoch of the *placers* or what is going on now in Klondyke is apt to give an idea of the state of mind of the future conquerors of America.

Out of an armed expedition for slave trade to catch Indians on the Isles and sell them as slaves in Fernandina (Cuba) or in Hispaniola (St. Domingo) there arose the expedition of Hernández de Córdoba; it was suggested, beyond doubt, by one of the most intrepid navigators of that

epoch, Anthony of Alaminos, who when still a youth had come to the Antilles in the second voyage of Columbus and had taken part in 1512 in the expedition led by Ponce de León in search of the Fountain of Youth, on the coasts of Florida. Anthony related the great Admiral had foreknown the existence of rich and fertile lands in the regions washed by the Gulf; in search of them the expedition was undertaken; it ended on the coasts of Yucatan, in the bay of the «Bad Fight» where it was broken and undone by the resistance organised, as a chronicler says, by one of two Spaniards who had been thrown on those coasts by a shipwreck and who in order to escape the sacrificer's knife had rendered his owners useful and minute services.

Diego Velázquez, governor of Fernandina for king Charles I, a man of great covetousness, enterprising, communicative and frank, was the centre of those attempts; all the trials ever

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Isabella the Catholic

made by Spain to possess Mexico, from the beginning of the XVI century up to past the first half of the present one, have been plotted in Cuba; only that of Cortés succeeded. The expedition of Hernández de Córdoba was followed by that of Juan de Grijalva destined by Velázquez to discover lands and to *ransom*, i.e. to barter gewgaw for gold, silver and precious stones; following the southern coasts of the Gulf he discovered the river in Tabasco which wears his name, the actual coasts of Veracruz where there remained engraved for ever the name of his patron saint (San Juan de Ulúa), whilst a picturesque river of the district still holds the name of one of his companions, Alvarado. The return of Grijalva with some gold and the news of his glimpses of marvellous lands heated to redness the imagination of the adventurers who had already grouped around Ferdinand Cortés, designated by Velázquez for a new and definitive expedition even before the return of Grijalva and with the previous leave of the Jeronimus monks on whom the Regent cardinal Cisneros had bestowed the exclusive faculty to permit or not such expeditions. The new captain was covetous as were all his companions, but he was more ambitious than all of them; his character and intelligence were of the size of his ambition; when Velázquez found out that his agent was a man capable of everything and felt the steel hidden under the velvet of the gentle forms of persuasive verbosity of the man who until then had passed his life in petty adventures as if he had only daring enough for such, he thought of depriving him of the command; Velázquez might have done so, but he did not contrive how to do it; he was disconcerted by the promptness and magnitude of the resolutions of his captain who proceeding like a pirate seized on the coasts of the great Antille all he needed to carry out an enterprise whose gigantic moment he foreknew and which just on this account attracted him with a magnetic power and which gradually disclosed itself to his genius ever rising and keeping up with the difficulties of the enterprise.

Without more credentials than his boldness and his faith, both equal because he was wont to place the former at the service of the latter, so much so that his life and his work became jeopardized, Sir Ferdinand parted, navigated guided by Alaminos, and with Constantine's labarum hoisted on the admiral's ship, steering towards the Yucatan coast. There, at Cozumel, he raised the cross of Christ over the crosses of the Maya sanctuary and acquired an interpreter (a shipwrecked Spaniard) and in Tabasco, after a most eager affray on the banks of the Grijalva, he won lady Marina, the Indian whom the retrospective adorers of the Aztecs call treacherous and whom the Aztecs adored almost as a deity, the Malintzin, the tongue, the selfsame verb of the conquest.

On the sandy, ardent, insalubrious coasts, bordering on the islet of St. Juan discovered by Grijalva, Cortés began his prodigious work; he soon became conscious of what he had undertaken. His exploration of the coast line, anxiously surveyed by the coast people who multiplied their signals and warnings at the sight of it, was known by the emperor of the Meshicans or Culhuas as they were called on the coasts. Motecuhzoma, at the first news of the presence of the Spaniards in the Gulf, had applied to the gods and the prophets; Grijalva's expedition came to evidence the truth of the presages: Quetzal-coatl fulfilling his promise, came to recover his reign; the Tecutli was going to flee, the priests retained him. Grijalva's disappearance allayed him; he rushed anew into the pleasure, the enjoyment

of commanding, tyrannising, recovering the divine ascendancy fear had divested him of; nobility, people, allies, tributaries never had felt so heavily the weight of imperial oppression. The Spaniards reappear; Motecuhzoma, stunned afresh, anxiously multiplies his embassies, his presents (terrible incentives to the covetousness of the newcomers), his cajoleries, his entreaties, his denials to the intent of Cortés to undertake the journey to Tenochtitlan. He sent divines and magicians to conjure and undo the cross bearers who opposed the sacrifice of human victims on the holy altars: who were gods because they disposed of the thunder and lightning, because they demolished without being struck down by a thunder bolt the bloody altars of the national gods, who requested gold, gold and more gold and who by their mere presence had brought about the insurrection of all the maritime tributaries of the empire. The emperor felt himself pulled into the abyss by his dead gods, he was one vanquished by Quetzalcoatl, he was the vanquished by Christ.

Cortés was not long in becoming aware of this situation; he knew the history and circumstances of the Aztec empire, its resources, the emperor's fears; he entered into relations with Motecuhzoma's

foes, procuring to ally closely with them and to lull the unconquerable suspicions of the prince: the expedition from one of exploration and ransom became transformed into one of domination and conquest. Probably never in history an equal enterprise was undertaken in such conditions.

His powers, already illegal, at any rate, had expired; the partisans of Velázquez abounding among the handful of men that composed the army, remonstrated undisciplined and wanted to pull the expedition back to Cuba; all vacillated; Cortés manoeuvred. He decided the land was to be peopled, he constituted a municipality (the first Veraacruz) and that sort of natural and primitive form of political life bestowed a legal personality on Cortés nominating him Chief Justice and Captain general of the royal armies and submitting all to the sanction of the sovereign. Astuteness, rigour, clemency, all was had recourse to by Cortés



Lady Marina (according to informations and pictures of her epoch)

and thus he contrived to dominate that group of men who held themselves capable every one of them to be the captain; having destroyed with a stupendous boldness the ships about to be destroyed by the tempests, sparing the tacking that might serve to rig others whenever needed; having transferred the settlement to a better site and organised and fortified, Cortés, now out of all communication with the Spanish world, relying only on his genius and exertion, having submitted with all the legal formalities the tributaries of Motecuhzoma in that country to obedience to their new master king Charles, undertook the titanic ascent of the oriental Sierra; he was going to visit Motecuhzoma.

We shall not enter into the most interesting particulars of this epic journey whose episodes are well known; what was of a supreme moment in it, was the alliance with Tlascalalan that out of hatred to Tenochtitlan became a vassal to Spain; in spite of the superiority of the armament which was immense and of so much more effect the denser the warrior crowds of the Meshicans were, events demonstrated that but for the Tlascaltecan auxiliaries who surrounded with a thick human wall the Spanish group, this would have disappeared in the combats or on the sacrifice altar.

When Cortés arrived at Tenochtitlan, when he became aware of the impossibility of resistance by the monarch and the probability of a stubborn opposition by the grave and hostile population that surrounded him, he fancied he was kept as a hostage in the immense city of the teocalis and lakes and with an astonishing audacity he determined to invert that desperate situation and possessed himself of Motecuhzoma; the emperor-god was to be his talisman and his aegis. As for the Meshicans, on the empty throne of their lord they saw installed the divine image of their Fatherland.

If the affirmation of veracious chroniclers is a verity and not a hallucination, the Spaniards had been lodged in the centre of a treasure. Those who saw it were astonished of so much wealth and their covetousness acquired formidable proportions; that agglomeration of precious feathers, variegated tissues, gems, gold and silver objects constituted the treasure of but one of the sovereigns, Ashayacatl; after him the conquests had extended, the tributes had doubled. At the face of so great a temptation no one felt a misgiving about the attempted enterprise, all were resolved to carry it to the end. The nobility surrounded the captive Teauhltly, the Spaniards, generally, treated him well; he had for them all sort of complacency, even acknowledging himself solemnly a subject of the king of Spain. Only in one thing he never ceded, in what regarded his religion; he heard the preachings of Fray Olmedo, he heard Cortés who had some tinges of a theologian and a poet and even a scholar; to all he opposed the tenacious mutism of the mild and pusillanimous.

Cortés did not concentrate his attention in Tenochtitlan, he kept up a constant communication with Tlascalala and the coast; following his system to strike now and then a terrific blow, as he had done at Cempoalan, as he did at Chololan where he ordered, on his journey to Mexico, a frightful slaughter and coolly beheld its carrying out, he had some tlatoanis or lords guilty of outrages against the invaders burnt at the sight of the populace of the calpulis or suburbs of Tenochtitlan assembled before the palace-barracks.

He was uneasy; he felt the princes were preparing to rise against him; the Meshican army possessed of an admirable subordination, prepared for the supreme struggle at the

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Mexico. — Monument to Cuauhtemoc,
in the Reforma avenue



call of their chief the Tlacocheucatl, who at that moment was a captive (Cuittlahuac) (1). Emissaries sent to the feudal lords, all of them vassals of the Empire, to the tributaries, were crossing the country in every direction; on the market of Tlatelolco (newly conquered and annexed rival town of Tenochtitlan) where people met every week, hatred and threat were to be seen brightening the eyes of those ardent crowds waiting only for the summons of their sovereign to rush into combat. Under these circumstances Cortés visited the central teocali and with an unspeakable intrepidity threw the anthropophagous idols out of their sanctuary; this act increased to the utmost the craving for vengeance in the hearts of the people and the human waves thronged closer and closer around the Tecpan where the conquerors shared the treasure of Ashayacatl, not without turbulent manifestations of serious discontent among the soldiers who expected a great deal more; Cortés appeased them with promises.

It was high time; some Spanish ships sent by Velázquez had arrived at Veracruz and Motecuhzoma who had advised Cortés to abandon his enterprise or he would perish therein, told him the news. Cortés bravely departed to meet the messenger of Velázquez with a good many Spaniards and manoeuvred so cleverly that Narváez, this was the messenger's name, was about to lose his life and lost his army.

Cortés returned triumphant to Tenochtitlan; the population, delirious with rage, was besieging the Spanish quarters; the insensate Alvarado, left commander by Cortés, had killed a good many noblemen during a religious festival, in order to rob them, and thereon the calpulis had risen in revolt as one man. In vain Cortés had recourse to the interposal of the captive emperor; his people disowned him and he was wounded by one of the royal princes, young Cuauhtemoe. There was no other escape left but flight; the soldiers loaded themselves with gold, killed Motecuhzoma and surrounded by the Tlashealtecs the conquerors moved away in darkness. The Meshicans attacked them on the causeway to Tlacopan



Frar Bartholomew Olmedo

(1) The reader will find a masterly description of the Aztec army in the part of this work devoted to the Army.
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and killed, drowned and sacrificed a part of them; the remainder fled in the dreadful dusk of *the sad night*.

Huitzilipochtli was avenged; in his restored temple and on his new altars blood flowed once more to honour him; all the Spanish prisoners were sacrificed. The new great pontiff, Cuauhtemoc (son of ferocious Ahuizotl), directed the purification of the teocalis and doubtlessly crowned the brave Cuitlahuac, the actual chief of the battle in «the sad night.» Immediately after the town was cleansed of enemies by killing, from the Cihuacoatl (chief justice and peer with the monarch) down to common people, all who had manifested themselves addicted to the invaders; cleaning and works of defence of the town were ordered; all the garrisons of the empire were reinforced, above all in the zone where Cortés retired towards the sea and messages were sent to the independent as well as the tributary lords to establish alliances for common and supreme defence. However, the Meshicans, or Culhuans as they were called by their tributaries, struggled for a desperate cause; small pox introduced from the islands into Yucatan and afterwards brought upon the Veracruzan coasts by the soldiers of Narváez, spread with amazing celerity and leaving the Spaniards nearly unharmed caused havoc among the natives with fearful voracity. The best of the Meshican army, its indomitable veterans, the emperor himself succumbed; the divine disease as they called it believing it to be a sorilege of the tenlas, prepared the triumphal path of Cortés.

Sir Ferdinand firmly maintained his alliance with the Tlascaltecs (by coaxing them and granting them full liberty to pillage the still unsubdued districts and to devour their prisoners); from Segura de la Frontera (Tepeaca), the second of the towns founded by the Spaniards in these regions, he sent out excursions on a large scale, actual inroads bringing home an immense amount of war booty and, above all, prisoners who rid themselves from being eaten by becoming slaves. He agreed to the opinion then dominant among the Spaniards of the islands, that the Indians hardly differed from beasts and that all who were anthropophagous must be made slaves and marked with hot irons; and so they did many thousand times. By an overplus of luck Cortés could repair a good deal of his losses; Velázquez, from Cuba, sent ships in search of Narváez and Garay, from St. Domingo, issued expedition after expedition to take possession of the basin of the Pánuco according to the authorisation he had got; all of them repaired to Veracruz and fell into the hands of Sir Ferdinand who had resolved to take possession of Tenochtitlan having first mastered the lakes by means of ships built *ad hoc* (the famous brigantines) at Tescoco and he sent his king errand of what he had done and a sketch of what he meant to do requesting for the new discovered lands the name given them by the soldiers ever since the expedition of Grijalva: New Spain.

This man who multiplied his military achievements and his political activity so as to assume before the already most numerous groups of subdued Indians the attitude of a sovereign and supreme arbiter, who considered the Meshicans as rebellious subjects since Motecuhzoma had made full homage of his realm unto Charles V; this prodigious adventurer had a competitor worthy of himself in the new emperor of the Culhuans, pontiff Cuauhtemoc-tzin, the finest epic figure in American history. Cortés himself and Bernal Díaz, in a most prolix and interesting manner in his inimitable chronicle, have related the events of the siege of the Aztec capital; the slow concentration of the emperor's forces,

fighting yard by yard, always attacking, renewing the resistance every day with greater eagerness, inspite of the incessant struggle against the ever increasing numbers of the allies of the Spaniards and in spite of the pestilence that weakened them deeply ravishing preferrently their chiefs. The Spaniards burning down and laying waste the villages of the Culhuans and their friends, heeding above all to increase their booty with all the gold they could lay hold of and all the captives that could be reduced to slavery receiving the iron mark, went on possessing themselves of the valley, of the lake with their brigantines, and finally of the heads of the causeways; from that moment, the days of Tenochtitlan were counted.

Cortés has made the best eulogium of the defence of Tenochtitlan: «I, he says in one of his letters, seeing those of the town were such rebels *showing the firmest determination to die ever made by any generation*, was at a loss about the means to adopt in order to rid us of so great perils and toils and not wholly to destroy them and their town because it was the finest thing in the world.» Tenochtitlan was razed as it was being occupied; weak by disease, hunger and fatigue those men only wished to die; in the last fights they scarcely had strength to wield the macahuitl, the national sword and to embrace their shields; the innumerable canals and drains of the town were filled with corpses and ruins; over them, over the teocalis and the downfallen *tecpan*s,



Escutcheon of the Mexican Federation

leaping over sculptured stones and over broken idols, the assailants advanced by thousands and thousands; the smell of blood and death had attracted from the Chichimecan lands and the boundaries of Shalishco the ferocious hords that came to presence the amazing agony of the eagle. The gods were silent and dead; sure to be vanquished, those men, those women who rather devoured their children than see them slaves, struggled to the last beat of their hearts, without any hope. Poor Tenochcans! If History stops to contemplate you with admiration, what less can be done by us, the sons of the land you sanctified with your ache and your civism? You deserved that the country you died for should resuscitate; your conquerors' own hands prepared the revival; out of your blood and theirs, both heroic, there arose the nation that has proudly adopted your name of an errant tribe and with deep felt filial piety has engraved on the ensign of its eternal freedom the eagle of your primitive oracles.

Tlaltelolco being conquered and destroyed, Cuauhtemoc, the soul and genius of the resistance, being caught and enchained, all was finished. The work of the conquest was settled; all that remained was the consequence of Cortés' incomparable enterprise.

We, the present Mexicans, are the offspring of both nations and of both races; we are conquest born; our roots lie both in the land where the aboriginal tribes lived and in the Spanish soil. This fact dominates all our history; we owe it our soul.



Ships of the epoch of the Conquest

BOOK SECOND

THE COLONIAL PERIOD AND THE INDEPENDENCE

NEW SPAIN

THE CONQUERORS

CHAPTER FIRST

FOUNDERS AND PEOPLES

FERDINAND CORTÉS: GOLD; THE CAPITAL. SUBMISSION OF MICHOACAN. EXPEDITIONS
ON THE COASTS AND THE ISTHMUS; SETTLEMENTS. CORTÉS GOVERNOR AND CAPTAIN GENERAL:
THE PÁNUCO; ALVARADO AND OLID; EXPEDITION TO LAS HIBUERAS. NUÑO DE GUZMÁN IN THE WEST.
YUCATÁN: CAMPECHE, MÉRIDA, VALLADOLID. PUEBLA AND MORELIA. THE CONQUEROR CAZIQUE.
LAST CONQUESTS. TYPE OF SETTLEMENT. FIRST POLITICAL DIVISION

THE mere heroic period of the Conquest was over; since the middle of August 1521 expeditions will not be scarce, exploits will be vyingly multiplied, the bravery and daringness of the Spanish heart will have ample scope of exhibition; but with those epic exertions there will be blended, more and more stringently, the needs of reconstruction and reorganisation, of pacification and spaniolisation equivalent to christianisation, and it must be acknowledged

the great character of Ferdinand Cortés, in this second part of his work, in spite of lamentable faults and errors, kept the same high range as in the first.

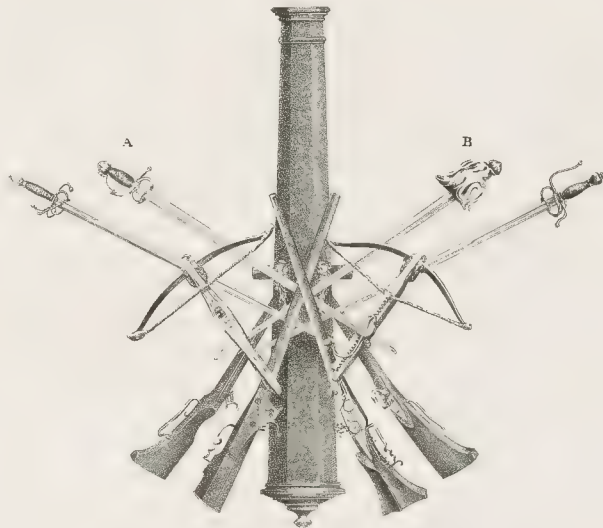
The glorious acquisition of the Aztec empire, begun as a particular enterprise, Cortés losing all his titles in the very instant of undertaking it, carried out with no other credentials than the conditional and imperfect ones put into his hands by a town council of his own making, had been a stupendous adventure. To transform it by purging it of all that was irregular and aleatory about it, by legalising it through the surrender to the Crown of Castile of what had not cost the Crown a single farthing, i.e. by resigning the faculties necessarily sprung from the circumstances; to organise it, in sum, in order to render it definitive, such was the endeavour of Cortés; he was the genius that improvised a great work, and to render it everlasting he surrendered it to others, not without paternal yearnings, but with the religious convictions of a loyal vassal.

There was nothing to restrain the authority of the conqueror when he rose lofty on the ruins of vanquished Tenochtitlan; Cuauhtemoc, *the fallen eagle*, lay at his feet and with this heroic prince the whole federal empire of Anáhuac; the allies who had been the principal instruments of the conquest, intoxicated with blood and gorged with booty, acclaimed the *Malinche* and withdrew in thick masses to their mountains or towns, carrying along with them so deeply impressed in their minds the prestige of the conquerors of the Moshicans that they may be said to have become conquered for ever themselves by aiding the conquerors. The Spanish soldiers, undisciplined by the incurable want of discipline coincident with the relaxation of the moral and nervous tension required by a war enterprise carried out with a formidable expenditure of sacrifice, watchfulness and valour, when absolute victory has crowned the superhuman exertion, discontented for not having found the heaps of gold and jewelry they, in their paroxysm of covetousness, imagined like wonderful islets amid a lake of Aztec blood, and instigated by the group of partisans of Diego Velázquez, prone to ascribe their deception to perfidies and frauds of Cortés, they joined attempts of rebellion to their reproaches and bacchic songs and converted revels in riots; all this, however, was only momentaneous: that man unauthorised by his rebellion and denied by his enemies, recovered like Caesar, merely by his presence and speech, the ascendancy he had over his companions of struggle, so that they let him command and punish, with their hands on the hilts of their swords, but with their rude heads bent and trembling.

Looking at matters from a certain point of view we may say New Spain (this name sprang spontaneously from the conquerors and was confirmed afterwards by the kings) rose independent; if Cortés in those years had called up all the men of prey that had agglomerated in the Antilles where at the beginning they tried to acclimate actual colonies of convicts and felons, and if he had offered them a feudal dominion over the immense territories he had subdued or imagined, dominion which the kings of Castile intended to undo and finally succeeded, perhaps Spanish domination would not have taken root in isthmian America. Later on, some day, the devotees of the conqueror, at the sight of the king's ingratitude and injustice, offered to forge him a crown in Mexico and to defend it with their swords; Cortés rejected the offer indignantly: monarch worship was an inherent element of the Spanish soul as it had waxed in eight centuries of struggle for the fatherland under the shade of the cross and the royal pennant.

Cortés, obeying unwillingly, yielded later on to the intimations of him who acted as *oficial real* (royal deputy) in his small army, Alderete, and to the tumultuous urgings of his soldiery and, probably, also to avoid being deemed collusory with the captive magnates to retain for himself fancied treasures, consented the torment that disabled Cuauhtemoc for ever as a soldier, but placed under his carbonised feet a pedestal hundredfold higher than his military glory together with the glory of his conqueror; martyrdom converted the imperial hero into a human hero.

The fever for gold, the moral epidemic that kills in the hearts every feeling of pity and tenderness, invaded with frequent intermittences those men of steel who blindly believed thankful Providence, in reward of an eight centuries battle, had cast before them America as a prey to falcons. In search of gold they navigated in ships that were molecules without consistency, carried off by the clashing of boundless seas and endless tempests, towards continents ever dreamt of, under skies never dreamt of. Their energies increased with the dangers, strengthened by the obstacles, became gigantic by adversity; they were vanquished only by death; but no, not even by this; the religion of hope assumed to make them survive and present them before the Supreme Judge stained with blood, but with the cross of the sword on their lips and the faith in the sword and in the cross in their hearts.



Spanish weapons at the epoch of the Conquest
A. Sword of Ferdinand Cortés.—B. Sword of Bernal Díaz del Castillo

From Cortés' camp on the lava slopes of Ajusco, at Coyoacan, Spaniards and allies came down to rummage through the rubbish, to rip up the tombs, to overturn the temples and to burst open the sewers at Tenochtitlan and Tlalcolco and amidst the deadly miasms that saturated the atmosphere of that marshy slaughterplace they passed all day interrogating the corpses and ruins: these men tormented death to oblige it to reveal the glimpsed treasures, but they got nothing or very little. Then, always searching, they rushed on the live wealth, that which breathed and suffered; and so they began to turn the Indians into slaves stamping on their cheeks or thighs the hot marking irons.

Henceforth an almost new personality began to become conscious of itself in Cortés:

that of a fatherly protector of the conquered. He tried to mitigate and modify the fate of the captives hoping to be able to change it. Meanwhile he resolved to establish a centre for his dominions of to-day and his conquests of to-morrow and chose the same town that had been a witness of the glory of the Meshicans and of his own; and on the ruins of *Temiztitlan* as he said, he raised hurriedly the capital of New Spain. Comprising the nearly destroyed imperial palaces he drew its quadrilateral tracing, surrounded it with the draining canals constantly filled by the lakes, divided it by a large canal, provided it with drinking water by repairing the Aztec aqueduct, dug the basements of the future temple under the very altar of the anthropophagous gods and within that line, fortified in some parts and leaning on the armed docks of the brigantines (the Atarazanas), he lodged the Spaniards; outside he distributed the Meshicans by groups, under the care of their lords who obeyed their invalid emperor and his vicar, the *Cihuacoatl*. Thus Mexico arose at the level of the surrounding lake and below the level of the other lakes of the region; it began doomed, as its mother Tenochtitlan had been, to fight unremittingly with the water that would infiltrate every pore of its basements and hinder the circulation of health through its veins. From the town of Cortés an American Spain was to irradiate towards the seas and towards centuries to come.

At the camp of Coyoacan where a few definitive buildings began already being erected, they searched in the pictorial registers of the tributes paid to Motecuhzoma, to find out the places of the empire that paid gold in tribute in order to go there in spite of any obstacle, as in search of brimstone Montaña had ascended the smoking crater of Popocatepetl and descended some of the gigantic stairs of its interior grades. Some soldiers made excursions for their own account and risk; one of them brought news from Michoacan as an auriferous country; it was thither the covetous looks of Cortés' army converged.

Relations were established between the court of Tzintzuntzan and the head quarters of Coyoacan; the king's envoys bringing rich presents, kindled the Castilian covetousness. The *Purepechans*, who dominated the Michoacan empire that extended from the boundaries of the Meshican empire and the Chichimecan districts as far as the shores of Colima and Zacatula, or *Tarascons* as they were called by the Spaniards, had a sovereign frightened by oracles and terrified by the news of the Spaniards' powerfulness. A warlike party had endeavoured to organise resistance, but king Tzintzicha had preferred keeping his life and his throne as a vassal rather than fighting for honour and patriotism; he came with a great retinue to call on Cortés, did homage to the king of Castile, allowed himself to be baptised and returned to his capital on the banks of the Pátzcuaro; he returned with the profoundly contemptuous nickname of *Caltzontzin* bestowed on the coward by the Meshicans. Soon after Olid crossed the Michoacan empire on his road to Colima, visited the capital and was regaled by the monarch. The temples where the sidereal religion of the Purepechans had agglomerated riches to decorate the mansion of the god they adored with diverse manifestations, but where there were no idols, according to what has been stated, the temples of God-Sun, of mother Nature, of the cruciform constellation of the South, those rich temples came silently to the ground; the sepulchres (*yácatas*) were profaned and lost their treasures. Michoacan was stripped of its attire to receive its new masters. The new master was utterly

cruel when he was a conqueror and was called Nuño de Guzman, but he was a redeemptor when he was the missionary bishop and his name was Vasco de Quiroga.

In the celebrated document which, were it not that the name seems to imply too modern ideas, might be called the first constitutive charter of New Spain, issued at Valladolid in June 1523, clause 18 runs thus: «Y por que soy ynformado que en la costa abaxo de esta tierra ay un estrecho para passar de la mar del norte (el Golfo) á la mar del sur (el Pacifico) e por que á nuestro servicio conbiene mucho savello yo os encargo y mando (á Cortés) que luego con mucha diligencia procureis de saver si ay el dicho estrecho y enbieis personas que lo busquen e os traigan larga e verdadera relacion de lo que en ello allaren y continuamente me escribireis e enbiareis larga relacion de lo que en el se hallase, porque como beis esto es cosa muy ynportante á nuestro servicio (1).» And then the king added he was informed that «azia la parte del Sur de esa tierra (N. España) ay mar en que ay grandes secretos e cossas de que dios nuestro señor sera muy servido y estos Reynos acrecentados (2),» charging the conqueror to ascertain most carefully what was the truth of all this. All the expeditions of



Vasco de Quiroga

those epochs, since Nuñez de Balboa, in 1513, took possession of the Pacific for the kings of Castile had for their chief geographical aim the discovery of the passage that ought to unite the two seas, its lack being actually strange in so immensely longitudinal a continent as America is; the Americans ought to correct, in the next century, this imperfection of Nature's work. The expeditions to the Gulf, to the Isthmus, to the south American

(1) «And being informed that on the lower coast of this land there is a strait to pass from the north sea to the south sea and it being very convenient for our service to know it I charge and order you to ascertain with much diligence whether the said strait exists and to send out persons to look for same and to bring you ample and true relation of what they may find and immediately you will write and send me ample relation of what there may be found in it, because you see this is a very important thing for our service.»

(2) «Towards the south of that land there is sea wherein there are great secrets and things by which god our lord will be very much served and these realms increased.»

regions, so fertile for Spain of unexpected discoveries and stupendous acquisitions had as a geographical compass to guide them, the discovery of the Strait.

Cortés never was unmindful about this and even before taking Tenochtitlan he had sent his explorers southward, towards the isthmian districts, being persuaded it would be he who discovered the longed for passage that would approach Spain to the land of the spices and gems and incense continuing the interrupted course of Columbus, prosecuted later on by the marvellous periplus of Magellan through the eternal solitudes of the austral sea. The first expeditions came to a disastrous end in the mountains of the indomitable *Mishes*; after the taking of the Aztecan capital they took a new increment; the fight against the mountaineers lasted long years; those utterly broken countries were said to abound with gold and silver; moreover, the intestine divisions and struggles being rife every where people had reached a monumental civilisation, were mightier aids for the Spaniards than their arquebuses and their horses and their dogs employed to devour Indians with pitiless fierceness in these expeditions by the brave and ferocious Sir Peter Alvarado. Tzapotecs and Mishitecs were contending with one another; the former surrendered to and allied with the Spaniards; at last the same was done by the warlike *Mishes* obeying angrily their kings disheartened by the priests. During that period the Spanish captains began the foundation of the town of the Holy Spirit (Coatzacoalco) at the extremity of the isthmus; in the centre of the mountain chains that part from the Zempoaltepec knot, in the valley of Huashyaca (ancient military colony of the Meshicans), a town called the same name as the second founded by the Spaniards, Segura de la Frontera, peopled and then abandoned by the conquerors, became definitively constructed with the name of Antequera (to-day Oaxaca) only in 1526; that indefatigable Sandoval who founded towns both on the coasts of the Gulf (Medellin and Coatzacoalco) and in the proximity of the Pacific, went to Michoacan, following up the unlucky expeditions of Alvarez and of Olid and as a victorious pacificator founded Colima, whilst at Zacatula an intrepid group began the construction of the ships destined to attempt the voyage to India. Alvarado as fearless as pitiless, pervades the isthmus, terrifies the caziques and followed by his voracious greyhounds turns into gold the blood and tears of the native villages, gathering an immense booty that incites the covetousness and the revolt of the soldiers repressed with an iron hand; having penetrated into Tabasco he then returned to Mexico, this proud and rapacious man being beyond doubt the most cruel of that flock of birds of prey. Thus, Cortés, before receiving the royal letters patent in which he was titled governor and captain general (Valladolid, October 1522) had subjugated the whole former empire of Motecuhzoma.

Cortés did not remain inactive in his camp at Coyoacan. He superintended the edification of Mexico that progressed quickly thanks to the crowds of Indians (many of them captive slaves wearing the iron mark on their faces) employed in the construction; it may be said the capital was erected by them, at the expense of their toils and frequently their lives; friar Toribius of Benavente considered the restauration of Mexico as one of the greatest plagues that befell the indigenous family. By the rumours coming from Spain, silent till then, Cortés forefelt and almost perceived the desperate fight set on between his fame and his foes headed by governor Velázquez and supported by bishop Fonseca malignantly hostile to every great

American enterprise. Great was the rejoicing of Cortés when his nominations arrived, although he may be said to have expected them. Nor did he keep quiet thereupon. A little while before, learning that Garay, the governor of Jamaica attempted once more the conquest of the basin of the Pánuco, now provided with many resources and large faculties obtained from the king, and that the expert Sir John Grijalva was to lead the expedition. Cortés repaired quickly to the Pánuco with an army of Aztec auxiliaries rivals of the conquerors in misdeeds and ferocity and after putting to death some caziques and branding hundreds of captives he caused his constant Sandoval to found the village of Sancti Stephen of the Port (now municipality of Pánuco). Such was the state of things met with by Garay: his companions, dispersed and broken, about to perish all of them amidst the furious resistance of the natives which Cortés caused Sandoval to repress brutally by burning several chieftains, fell into the hands of the Cortesians; at last, the Governor himself who had an agent's and not a conqueror's soul as people said, was reduced to seek personally the shelter of Cortés who treated him benevolently and let him die in peace. Now disengaged of this heavy care Cortés meant to carry out two great projects he had been ripening long



Sir Christopher Olid

since in connection with the search of the Strait, of the interoceanic communication, in whose existence he had an imperturbable faith. He wanted to conquer the part of Central America next to New Spain in order to snatch from Pedrarias Dávila, governor of isthmian America, the richest portion of his future conquests and so to assure for himself the glory of discovering the Passage. One of these expeditions headed by Alvarado was to cross Oaxaca, the Mexican isthmus, and Soconusco where there was already a Spanish garrison, in order to invade Guatemala which, according to offers made by some caziques, only awaited this event to submit to the crown of Castile; the other expedition which Cortés intrusted to Olid, unluckily for both of them, was to go by sea, gather provisions and reinforcements

in Cuba, land on the coasts of the Gulf of Honduras (the Hibueras), conquer, on behalf of Cortés, that country about whose riches marvellous tales were circulating, and leave it pacified and settled.

Alvarado succeeded in his enterprise; Olid, stirred up in Cuba by Cortés' irreconcilable foes, reached Hibueras, founded a settlement, and raised a cry of rebellion imitating the behaviour of his mandator towards Velázquez. When Cortés learned the news he sent an expedition against the rebel, but the storms and winds delivered the men into the hands of Olid; however Casas, the captain sent by Cortés and another of the conquerors of Mexico who happened to be there, perfidiously caught the insurrectionist chief and had him put to death directly. Cortés only learned the first part of this tragedy, the capture of his commissioner and resolved to take personal vengeance of all. He arranged a great expedition to be led by himself in spite of the advices of his friends and the intimations of the Royal officers recently sent from Spain to organise the fiscal administration of the Colony. Nothing would dissuade him; with royal pomp, so chroniclers tell, he left Mexico, intrusting with government the treasurer and the auditor named by the King, associating with them one licentiate Zuazo and forming thus a triumvirate with almighty, because indefinite, powers. With the captain general went the factor and the inspector, likewise royal officers who were not long in returning to Mexico, and many of the principal members of Garay's expedition and emperor Cuauhtemoc, the Cihuacoatl, the lord of Tlacopan, etc. Cortés foreseeing the expedition would last long and perhaps prove unsuccessful withdrew from the centre of his conquest all those who might place themselves at the head of some terrible revolt. As far as the mouth of the Coatzacoalco all went well, the expedition preserving its picturesque look and the royal character bestowed on it by the retinue and pomp of the conqueror. From there an incredible peregrination began through rivers and over mountains, through woods, marshes and lagoons, visited only by the savage tribes nomadising therein and by wild beasts, districts of an immense vegetable richness, where incessantly it proved necessary to create, at the expense of unspeakable privations and worries, a path, a road, a bridge, a raft to go ahead almost not knowing whither or whereto. Notwithstanding all this Cortés almost contrived to keep compact under his iron fist his troop harrassed by fatigue and disease. If Olid had been alive, when this exhausted, disarmed, hungry and worried expedition arrived at Hibueras, he probably would have captured it and sent Cortés to Cuba delivering him into the hands of Velázquez' friends. On the way, fearing perhaps the emperor and his friends would escape and make their appearance in Mexico, Cortés feigned the discovery of a conspiracy and had the Aztec prince and some of his companions hanged. The stoic serenity of the young emperor who probably in order to save his people had allowed himself to be baptised and called a christian name, faltered not a moment; thus he kept up to the last his gigantic moral superiority over his conqueror whose ears, afterwards, rang with the voice of his conscience, if we are to believe Bernal Diaz: later on, this crime found an echo in the voice of Charles V who reproved solemnly that cruel and useless act. Cortés never knew any scruple about the means to attain his aims; as nearly all great warriors and rulers, and he undoubtedly was one, he possessed in his inmost soul the belief expressed by Napoleon with tragical cynicism that those who realise great enterprises stand above all moral and positive laws... As if moral laws were not but formulæ of the vital necessities

of a society; as if therefore they were not laws of Nature; as if emancipation of Nature's laws were possible for those giants of History surrendered to death by a microbe of the swamps of Babylon in the veins of Alexander or by a grain of sand in the urethra of Cromwell!

After several months of unutterable sufferings the expedition to the Hibuernas reached its terminus; it had become aimless, Olid being dead and the riches of that region having turned out to be a fable; nor had it other consequences than the foundation of two or three wretched settlements and, as for Cortés, the loss of his prestige and the shipwreck of his power and fortune in Mexico undone by the mismanagement of the royal officers. Ill and unhappy Cortés returned to Veracruz a year and a half after leaving Mexico; his companions or had remained as settlers in Honduras or had joined Alvarado in Guatemala or came back damped with the Conqueror. Thence forward Cortés succeeded in nothing; the gallows of Cuauhtemoc projected its black shade over the evening of that life of triumphs and sorrows.

Natives and conquerors received with immense ovations the chief they had believed dead. To recover his fortune and his position, to punish his robbers, men of sheer iniquity, he employed months of toil and exertions not so successful as he wished; called to account by the Court and obliged to go to vindicate himself personally, about two years after his return from the Hibuernas, he embarked for Europe, leaving intrusted with the government of New Spain which he considered as his work and almost as his property, an *Audiencia*, a tribunal of justice and administration that was to be more hostile and more prejudicial for him than his worst enemies. At the head of this group of judges the king, by an enormous mistake, placed the famous Nuño Beltrán de Guzman who was governing the province of Pánuco in a way plague might have governed. His mismanagements had obliged the Indians to abandon their hamlets and to withdraw higher up; those who had not been able to do so were reduced to slavery, being often sent to the islands in exchange for cattle which soon multiplied on the fat pastures between the mountains and the coasts of Tamaulipas. The Spaniards themselves stood aghast.

Such was the man intrusted with the administration of justice in the colony; in Mexico he intermeddled in all sorts of abuses increasing and multiplying them and when the news from Spain made him aware that at the return of Cortés loaded with honours and the arrival of another *Audiencia*, his crimes would be punished, he resolved to wash his faults with the glory of a conqueror and only contrived to stain them in blood. Nuño de Guzman is the type of the primitive conqueror, who thought lawful any thing to gather gold, who moved exclusively by covetousness and proceeded with the submitted districts exactly as if they were a conquered town surrendered to plunder and slaughter; in him there is no admixture; there is astuteness, audacity, valour and intelligence perhaps; but all these qualities only serve to evidence more glaringly the dominant passion: covetousness. In a most iniquitous manner he had the king of Michoacan, the famous Caltzontzin, put to death after tormenting him to extort gold. He and his lieutenants, Oñate and the royal officer Chirinos, crossed in different directions the regions now comprised in the States of Jalisco, Aguascalientes, Zacatecas and the territory of Tepic; and one wonders what to admire more, whether the ferocity displayed by them torturing caziques, enslaving and branding hundreds of captives, allowing the Meshican and Tlascaltecan allies to set the villages on fire, or

the iron will and resoluteness to surmount privations and dangers in going and coming through those rugged lands at the expense of exertions that appear incredible even now. Having explored those countries already visited by other Spaniards who in some places had encomiendas which they possessed only nominally, not actually, they joined all together somewhere in Jalisco at the end of 1530. Already in the following year tyrant Guzman (so he is styled by some contemporary chronicler) and his companions who were «depriving God of the souls, the emperor of his vassals and the militant church of her children» descended by the rugged mountain steep towards the sea. It was then the conqueror called



Charles V

these lands «New Castile of Better Spain,» which name was afterwards substituted with that of New Galicia and a town was founded with the name of Compostela. At Tepic a sort of government was organised and then the expedition left for the north crossing large rivers, fighting hard battles and conquering the populous valley of Acaponeta that was frightfully devastated. The news from Mexico foreboding the ruin of all his power, the fatigues of the allies who died by hundreds, the lack of Indians of burden (tamemes), the indiscipline of the Spaniards (some of them were hanged as were many caziques who had protested), all this was not enough to clip the wings of this chieftain who went ahead as far as Sinaloa where he

founded the town of Culiacan. Oñate too had founded on the plateau of Nochistlan a town whose site he changed afterwards giving it the name of the conqueror's native town: Guadalajara. Nuño de Guzman rested in new Compostela which he uselessly tried to convert into an important settlement, the town becoming soon reduced to an insignificant village, and expected the coming events boldly resolved to meet them face to face.

Peopled and unpeopled, abandoned, towns, incessant insurrections of the mountaineers who withdrew into the unapproachable crags of the sierras rather than to fall into the hands of the pacificators who reduced them to slavery with their wives and children branding with the iniquitous iron even suckling babes; Nuño's resistance to the Audiencia and to Cortés going so far as to seize the official agents of those authorities; misdemeanours of the sol-

diers many of whom emigrated to Peru preferring this gold land to the districts of New Galicia only good for agriculture, but where it proved difficult to bring the fierce natives to servitude, and finally the abandonment of his conquests by the insolent president of the first Audiencia becoming a prisoner in Mexico, such was the end of Guzman's almost sterile enterprise, for it must be undertaken afresh. Dying wretchedly in a Spanish prison, this man did not pay his bloody and incendiary visit to the West of New Spain.

Whilst at that extreme a conquest was rather prepared than effectuated, another extraordinary attempt was being carried out at the oriental extreme. Sir Francis Montejo, Cortés' first proxy in Spain, associated with another envoy of the conqueror, Alonso Dávila, and covenanted with the king the conquest and settling of the isles of Cozumel and Yucatan. They had got already some experience at the Court and the royal instructions were remarkably sensible. The conqueror was rewarded granting him lands, part of the tributes, lucrative commissions, honours, perpetual titles; but for every settlement he wished to found, he must carry with him one hundred Spaniards from Spain, not from the islands whence they were allowed to extract only horses and all kinds of cattle. Inciting emigration by grants of land and slaves (Indian rebels or bought from their owners), exemption from taxes, etc., quantities to be retained for the Crown from all the metals found or extracted; assignment of part of fines to public assistance and material improvements; establishment of commissions with the aim that every commissioner was to take care of the instruction in the faith of a certain number of Indians, in exchange for personal services; such is in substance the administrative part, so to say, of covenants that may be cited as a pattern or type of that class of grants. But there was another most important part concerning Faith and the conquered people: the settlers were obliged to take with them a certain number of monks charged to heed the Indians were not vexed or stripped or injured in their bodies and properties when building houses; that recourse was had to war only in extreme cases and after a solemn requisition wherein the bull of a pope (Alexander VI) was alleged as giving the king of Spain the right of dominion over all America and of making war for the sake of it; enslavement and confiscation of property of all who resisted to render actual that donation (the pope had made of what never was his own). The most important stipulation is that referring to the kind treatment due to the natives from whom nothing could be exacted against their free will and without sufficient remuneration, the Spaniards being obliged to set a good example for morality.

With these stipulations and the resources they gathered of ships and men in Spain and of cattle and victuals in the islands, Montejo and Dávila undertook their enterprise accompanied by the royal officers; at the beginning of autumn 1527 they landed at Cozumel and soon after, on the coast of what they believed the island of Yucatan. Wearied and decimated by climate and diseases and frequent fights, meeting sometimes with hospitality and peace amidst the caciques, the expedition and reconnaissances on the shores of the peninsula washed by the Caribbean sea proved fruitless; an ephemeral settlement, Salamanca, founded on one place and then transferred to another, was unable to survive. In 1529, after a travel of Montejo to Mexico, Dávila and his men abandoned the undertaking and left for Tabasco where they were expected by Montejo and his son. Then it was agreed to attempt

the conquest from the southern side; Dávila and his companions after suffering hardships only comparable with those undergone by Cortés and his army during the luckless expedition to the Hibueras, arrived at Champoton, near Campeche, already known by the first discoverers and there they joined Montejo senior whose son also arrived bringing some auxiliaries. With them Dávila, a man endowed with superhuman endurance, went from Campeche to the lagoon of Chetomal, an unspeakably hard and long march; he attempted to settle there founding a town under the name of Villa-Real; but weakened and almost undone by Nature and the resistance of the Indians he was obliged to withdraw by sea to Honduras.

Yet a powerful attempt was made by the Montejos and with the alliance of the Tutulshius they were about to succeed and even thought they had founded a settlement endowed with vitality in the sacerdotal city of Chichen-Itzá, the town of the prodigious ruins.



Merida. — Montejo's house

It proved not so; there they were besieged, thence they escaped miraculously and at length, after a temporary refuge in Campeche, they were forced to give up the peninsula; after eight years of struggles and fights the work of conquest was still at its starting point when the famous covenant was signed.

The terrible plagues (locust and fa-

mine) that befell the Mayas, the bloody wars between the Cocomes and the Tutulshius, the uneasiness about the future fostered by the priests with terrible prophecies intending to conjure adverse destiny by bloody sacrifices, such is the warp of the history of the Mayas rid of the Spaniards' presence. Meanwhile a group of Franciscan monks who solicited by viceroy Mendoza, had left Mexico to go to evangelise the unconquerable Yucatecan land, began their fecund work at Champoton; however, the presence of a gang of Spanish bandits who, rid of all government, had settled thereabout doing slavetrade with the Indians and committing all sorts of outrages frustrated the saintly heroic work of the missionaries.

Then the performance of the chief part devolved on Ferdinand Cortés' former page, the already experienced captain Montejo junior: entrusted with the government of Tabasco about the year 1537; heir to the purposes of his father who lived involved in conflicts and plots with Alvarado in Honduras, he sent a troop of conquerors to Champoton: there they sustained themselves with great difficulty and even were going to give up the enterprise once more. Meanwhile the old governor, after the terrible failure of his plans in Honduras,

reached Chiapas and surrendered his powers unto his son Sir Francis who goes to Mexico, gathers resources and in 1540 lands at Champoton. He possesses himself of Campeche where he founds a settlement, in 1541, penetrates into the interior of the peninsula and establishes his head-quarters at T-oh, old capital of a native caziquedom; there he founds the city of Mérida, with its lord-mayors, aldermen, etc., sues and consolidates the friendship between Spaniards and Tutulshius, withstands a tremendous assault of the unsubdued caziques at Mérida and then sends his cousin Montejo towards the Oriental regions where he fights incessantly and founds the town of Valladolid. Since then the conquest continued without truce; new settlements were founded such as Salamanca de Bacalar and New Sevilla and by the bloody repression of formidable rebellions he consolidated the establishment of the commissions, the intervention of the Franciscan monks on behalf of the liberty of the Indians, the separation of Yucatan from the judicial tutelage of Guatemala and from the ecclesiastical tutelage of Chiapas: at length there came the persecution of the Montejos accused of great abuses in the distributions, of tyranny with the Indians, of irreverence towards the priests; there were great exaggerations in all this, since Indians, monks and Spaniards lamented deeply the disgrace of that family. Montejo senior died at the Court, poor and forsaken; Montejo junior continued living in Yucatan highly esteemed; the name was lost among the heirs. Being men of their epoch both of them did what all the conquerors had done. Centuries having gone by, there remains only that part of their work which deserves to live and which has won for them the veneration of peninsular history; they were the first fathers of the Yucatecan fatherland.

Not all the settlements of the Spaniards, in those first times of the colonial period, marked the bloody site of conquest; some had their origin in the necessities of conservation of the colony, the creation of urban centres destined to serve as a repairing place for trade, as a refuge for the Spaniards in case of a general revolt, as a gathering place for the agricultural produce of a zone. Thus to protect traffic between Veracruz and Mexico obliged to pass through the almost exclusively native populations of Tlaxcala and Cholula, the Government of Mexico (the second Audiencia) ordered the edification of a new town in whose tracing the Franciscan monks, and above all Motolinia, intervened. At the end of September 1531 the settlement stood performed which in its name Puebla de los Ángeles (Angels'town) kept, up to half a century ago, the seal of the mystic spirit of its tracers who had themselves aided in the material part of the work by some thousands of Indians of the large neighbouring villages. The town council of Mexico greatly opposed the edification of La Puebla (this being a rival) veiling their hostility with the uselessness of a settlement they thought deprived of all vitality; the Court of Administration persisted in their purpose, called Spanish families from Veracruz where they were decimated by the murderous climate, and in 1532 got the royal letters patent which granted the new settlement the name and rights of a town.

Michoacan where industrial culture was so remarkable before the conquest, had entered, after the passage of Nuño de Guzman, into a singular period of cautious backwardness and hostility towards the Spaniards, the villages becoming deserted, the inhabitants withdrawing to the mountains and returning into the savage state; the Court of government, ha-

ving already made some attempts to correct this state of things intrusting with this task some of those who had a greater number of shares there, resolved to send into the damaged kingdom the noble and humane Sir Vasco Quiroga. Among the men who consecrated their souls and lives, with strenuous endeavour, to sweetly initiate the Indians in christian culture, this member of the Audiencia deserves a special mention; such men as Las Casas, Zumárraga and Quiroga reconcile History even under the moral aspect from which idealists are wont to view things, with the christianisation of the Americans performed by Spain, although its forcible antecedent was conquest with all its violences and horrors.

Quiroga fixed his residence in the ancient capital, Tzintzuntzan, «the city of Michoacan» as it is called in the king's letters patent and thither he convoked the representatives of the nation dissolved on the pyre where Caltzontzin was burned; they came shy and mistrustful, heard the missive of peace and returned home enchanted; even the remembrance of their kings, their deities and their glories turned pale in the hearts of the Tarascans afore the love they conceived and still keep for him who afterwards was their bishop and always had been their father. Quiroga, understanding the needs, respecting the tendencies and traditions of the principal groups that composed the Tarascan family, applied in its economical constitution a system of division of work excellent in those times, devoting every village to one single trade. He also established hospitals that were true phalansteries and thus he saw revive by work and peace the prosperity of all. Amid these flourishing villages, between the lakes of Cuitzeo and Pátzcuaro, in 1540 or 1542, the town of Valladolid was founded in the graceful valley of Guayangareo. This town, of laical origin but which, as all things in America, was not long in being covered with the cloak of religion, is the present town of Morelia; under this name due to its egregious son Joseph Maria Morelos the old settlement of viceroys Mendoza began to partake of national life.

These were not the sole types of conquest and settlement; there are other very remarkable ones. In the XVI century, and earlier too, all the nomad tribes of the North were called *Chichimecs*; in the South where they bordered with the regions spontaneously or forcibly submitted to the Spaniards they committed all sorts of depredations, more and more vexing for the governors of New Spain: so they intrusted the pacification of the mountain ranges inhabited by wild tribes to the converted and assimilated Indians. These chose as a starting point for their expeditions Acámbaro formerly founded within the boundaries of Caltzontzin's realm; the caziques marvellously performed their parts as conquerors showing their Spanish weapons and horses; there happened curious affrays without arms, by cuffs and boxes; nor was the strife without its miracle; St. James made his appearance amid the combatants on behalf of the christian Indians, thereby demonstrating clearly that for heaven Americans were as good as Europeans, and out of all this sprang Querétaro that at first only vegetated but afterwards was a good centre for agricultural commerce; some groups of vanquished Chichimecs gathered in congregation around a stone cross that very soon became miraculous and thus was the cradle of the future town. We already stated, if there is a proven fact in our history, it is that the conquest of New Spain for the Castilian kings was done by the natives themselves under the guidance and with the direct or indirect aid of the Spaniards. It was the supreme cleverness of Ferdinand Cortés to steer that course

in a work otherwise impossible on account of its colossal hugeness. And there is nothing more expressive than the statement of cazique Nicholas of St. Lewis Montañés who, nominated captain-general «by the king mylord His Majesty,» such are his words, to conquer the great Chichimeca that was afterwards Santiago de Querétaro, unto which enterprise he



Cathedral of Puebla

convoked all the caziques and caziquedomos of his lineage when giving account of his work he ends with the following words: «By the force of our arms we wun these lands of which His Majesty ordered to make the conquest.»

The work of conquest and pacification, not terminated in the xvi century, yet progresses sufficiently to trace the outlines of New Spain that were immense, considering it had

subordinated on the South Honduras, on the North the enormous indefinite space reaching from Texas to Florida, and on the Occident not only the not yet explored littoral tract of the Pacific shore, but far beyond, in the Ocean itself, the Philippine archipelago, of which an expedition organised in Mexico took possession for Philip II. In the maritime period, let us say so, of the enterprises of exploration and conquest, it is likewise the great figure of Cortés that stands out shining. Since the day after the seizure of Tenochtitlán (or Tenochtitlan as the Meshicans would have written not accentuating the last syllable) his agents had ships built at Zacatula and Tehuantepec to explore the coast of New Spain in search of the famous strait, to cross the South Sea in order to find the island of Spices or to found in Catay (China) a colony like New Spain to lay it at the feet of Caesar Charles V. The sum of energy, perseverance and boldness wasted by Cortés to realise his dream, is incredible; materials carried from Veracruz to the coast of Michoacan and to the Isthmus, building of ships by any means and journeys to Acapulco, to Zacatula, to Manzanillo, to watch the course of the expeditions, the failure of all of them by fires, shipwrecks, revolts; loss of all or nearly all the ships whose dwindled crews were generally captured and ill-used by Nuño de Guzman; nothing daunted the captain general. The relations of monks and explorers come from Florida or departed from Mexico, giving notice of the existence of immense prodigiously rich kingdoms at the North of the Sinaloans, began to incense the covetousness of all; so Cortés managed to put himself at the head of an expedition, surveyed the coasts of Sinaloa, Sonora, lower California, crossed the Gulf of that name and when he returned to Mexico where people were thinking he had perished, new projects were bustling in his head in spite of the dreadful adventures of his last periphus.

Viceroy Mendoza went to consolidate the uncertain work of Nuño de Guzman; New Galicia had not been pacified, rebellions being constant and general among those most fierce tribes. Sir Peter Alvarado who with the king's consent had managed for himself, by dint of litigations and conquest, some kind of feudal seigniorship in Guatemala and also wished to explore the Pacific, happening to pass through the Jalisco districts when going to embark his troops, brought help to governor Oñate who was in jeopardy, and lost his life in consequence of a fall in the rugged paths of the mountain. It was the viceroy who fighting and pacifying, performed the enterprise and New Galicia with its capital and Audiencia was soon the most distinguished member of that colonial organisation.

Meanwhile the legend about the realms of Cibola and Quivira vanished. A most singular thing that! those fabulous riches were actually existing there; only some were hidden and others lay potentially in the auriferous soil and in the astonishing fertility of California. However, the viceroy and Cortés persevered in arranging conquests; at last the conqueror, deeming his rights trampled upon, returned to Spain in search of satisfactions and there he died.

The century was going ahead and with it the work of the submission of the natives that might have been prolonged indefinitely approached its term. The search for minerals produced the foundation of Zacatecas, one of the chief towns of the present State of this name in our Federacy and which were *head quarters* of mining in their origin, thus widening the limits of New Galicia; afterwards Durango was founded on the banks of the Guadiana and almost ended the final formation of the province of New Vizcaya that had for an

advanced fort the garrison of Chihuahua and comprised the territory of the present State of this name, of Durango and part of Coahuila. By special covenants with the king the exploration and conquest was begun of the new realm of Leon, between the province of the Pánuco, New Galicia and New Vizcaya; in fact the consolidators of this new acquisition were monks; one of them founded Monterrey. The necessity to defend themselves against the nomad tribes who were wandering over the slow slopes of the northern plateau, from one mountain range to the other, obliged to found settlements for defence, and such were in their origin Celaya, St. Michael of Allende, St. Lewis of the Potostí, that received this surname because it was believed its mineral riches could be compared with those of the famous Peruvian district. This task to pacify the Chichimecan tribes (they gave themselves other names) could not be performed in that century and passed to the following generations: combats, missions, forcible reduction of the Indians into congregations and villages, settlements among them of other already spaniolised Indians, such as the Tlascaltecs, all was put into practice and at length a slow success was half obtained. When the century of the Conquest was at its end, the Spaniards had not yet settled their dominion in the northern regions of Sinaloa nor in Sonora and were looking over New Mexico for the fabulous kingdom of Quiviría.

When founding a town the Spaniards proceeded thus: the settlers chose a place they generally considered provisional, because the city was not to be simply a group of houses and a church; it meant something more, it was an institution; it could be transplanted as it happened with Guadalajara (definitively established by the first viceroy) and as it was with Villarreal, whose settling we are going to describe briefly as it may be considered typical according to the statement of the most remarkable historian of our colonial times.

Having overcome the heroic resistance of the Chiapans who, rather than surrender themselves to the conquerors, had preferred throwing themselves into the precipice together with their wives and children from the crag that was their last fortress, captain Mazariegos, a clever and a kind man, proceeded to assign the Indians he had taken prisoners a place where they ought to live in community and hear the preachings of the missionaries (probably this place was Chiapa) and near about there he selected a site to establish provisionally the Spanish town that was to serve like the Roman colonies, as a centre of pacification, colonisation and watching over the district; only in one thing they differed: Spanish colonies were focuses of religious propaganda, Roman colonies were never so. On the selected site the Indian improvised a few houses for the Spaniards; these met in the dwelling of the captain general and governor of the province who declared his resolution to establish there temporarily a town to be named Villarreal; he immediately nominated the mayors binding them by oath to make good use of their office and to be faithful to God and the king and delivering them the verges of justice, elected the aldermen who at their turn nominated a jailer and a town crier; and then a city steward, an attorney and a high constable; possession of their offices was given directly to the visitor general and the notary public nominated by Government in Mexico, and this communal authority began their functions. The conquerors ceased in that moment to be such and became settlers; the soldier was converted into a citizen and enjoyed the rights of every person forming part of the municipality. The first meeting of the council took place, the appointments of the officers were fixed and the erection of a

pillory in the market place and of a gibbet on the next hill was ordered; a register was opened of all the citizens, a coveted title, not only because it entitled to receive distributions of Indians and gifts of groundplots, but because it implied the distinctions and honours granted to the first settlers and delivered from the pursuits against people without a steady seat. Having got so far the town was lifted from where it stood and transferred to a better site where streets were traced and named, groundplots distributed and a church raised: such were the origins of San Cristobal Las Casas, capital of the State of Chiapas until not long ago.

The only question now was to affirm and to consolidate: the chief part was sketched, if not achieved and performed. All this bulk, still without sufficient cohesion although notoriously on the way to attain it, officially was divided thus: one viceroyalty; the two Audiencias of Mexico and New Galicia. All the territory of the viceroyalty, on the shores of the Gulf and of the Pacific and the States comprised between these littoral tracts, within the Central plateau, were dependent on the first Audiencia; a large part of present Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes and Durango formed the jurisdictional territory of the Audiencia of New Galicia; New Vizcaya depended directly on the viceroy. In reality, nothing was definite; it was an official square, uncertain and movable, within whose huge frame the new nationality was going to increase and move.



MEXICO
COURTYARD OF THE INQUISITION
(Present Medical School)

CHAPTER II

THE PACIFICATORS

THE APOSTLES: THE FIRST FRANCISCANS; PROPAGATION OF CHRISTENDOM.
DEFENCE OF THE INDIANS: LAS CASAS; ZUMÁRRAGA; FUENLEAL; QUIROGA. THE MONKS: TEMPLES
AND CONVENTS. INQUISITION; THE COMPANY OF JESUS

THE two priests who came to Mexico with the conquerors and who, if ever they interposed on behalf of the Indians, attained or even intended but little, were followed by the first Franciscan mission, a simple apostolic group composed of two friars and a lay brother, the latter being Sir Peter Gante. This vanguard of the evangelisation of New Spain, showed the right way: the direful doctrine secretly or openly professed in the Islands, that the natives, properly speaking, were no rational beings or hardly so, a diabolical contrivance, as some monks said, to mask the insatiable rapacity of the slave traders, and which was the cause of the islands growing unpeopled, never crossed, not even as a momentary bad thought, the mind of the monks and to speak the truth, never was professed by Cortés either: he looked upon the Indian as a rational being, a younger brother who waited for his redemption and was worthy of it. With this maxim on his labarum Gante devoted him-

self to teaching at Tlaxcala, at Mexico and his companions began to preach as well as they could do with pathetic gestures, with childlike but expressive pictures and with the aid of interpreters. Afterwards there arrived the twelve Franciscan monks called the *Custody*, directed by Sir Martin Valencia, the *custodian*, thirteen friars, a true apostolate of faith, humility, poverty, fervour, men in whom the angelical spirit of the founder of the order had returned into life; all the tenderness, all the sweetness of the religion of Francis of Assisi was needed to show the world, at that epoch, a number of Spaniards who were not hard, who were not cruel: the monks of the custody were so only against themselves.

The Indian became their son at once; the study of the native languages became the principal occupation of the monks together with christianisation; they were not long in dominating most of those languages and then with the help of some paintings representing the supreme passages of the life of Christ, they began their preaching excursions over New Spain and throughout the American lands; the XVI century had not come to its end, the pre-columbian world, excepting the nomad tribes it was impossible to reduce into congregations, had been baptised; was it christian?

The apostles destroyed temples by hundreds, burned or broke idols by thousands; all the paintings or pictorial scriptures they imagined might have an idolatrous signification, were destroyed; impossible to do else for men of such ardour and under those circumstances. The fact is they consumed precious data for the history of the life and thoughts of the aboriginal families and the loss is noways compensated by what the monks conserved, at last, of those inestimable documents, by what they ascertained, by what they caused to be written and by what they wrote themselves. It is compensated by the full initiation of the indigenous family in christendom, by the abolition of the bloody superstitions, by having put them into the road that was to conduct them to solidarity with the world of civilisation: just as History absolves the cruelty of the conquest of the Meshicans, it absolves the destruction of the native documents; those men were no archaeologists, they were apostles; they deemed necessary what they did; their purpose was superior to the value of the monuments, how valuable soever we may suppose them; the loss was irreparable, the gain was immensurable.

In order to save the Indians it was necessary to show they could be christians, it was indispensable for them to be so; were they so? They were so for the conquerors and this respect caused the iron hand always ready to punish to shudder and weakened it. They were christians in the eyes of the conquerors most of whom nearly confounded religion with worship, with ritualism, with the protection and veneration of the saints, almost feticism based on the material images; theirs was a semi-idolatry. The Indians never were christians as Francis of Assisi was, nor could they be so intellectually, since their psychological conformation did not allow them to rise into the regions of pure metaphysics, neither before nor after being educated, neither before nor after frequenting colleges and Universities, neither before nor after blending with the Spanish race equally unfit for transcendental philosophical conception; from Spanish Universities marvellous dialecticians came forth; came there one sole philosopher, a man capable to sum up in one single thought the existing world, to explain it by another thought and to show between both an inflexible dialectical link of union? Two or three individualities may be mentioned, but their importance as philosophers will always be controverted. No, the christendom preached to the Indians

was gross as it ought to be: dependency on a supreme judge and king, a soul surviving the body and obliged to answer to that judge for its acts, rewards and punishments, these above all, terrible as it suits races newly come forth out of the ethnical matrix, child races; their absolute equalness, before that judge, with their conquerors, their masters; a reform of customs aiming above all at the abolition of polygamy and the moral emancipation of woman, at the hatred of idols and bloody rites. And the supreme judge dwelling very high and being very severe, hence the consolatory necessity to have recourse and refuge to mediators and advocates, to the Holy Virgin and the saints; to these we always must apply intrusting to them the defence of the sinner before God; to them all the presents, all the offering, all the entreaties, all the dearness; to God tremendous fear, to Maria all love. The native woman kneeling down before the altar of Maria of Guadalupe, her Mother, Indian like herself, and telling her sorrows and her hopes, in Mexican or Otomí, in a dialogue that perennially has for its answer the sweet look of the image, sums up all the theology of the indigenous race. And the monks being those empowered by the advocates and the saints, to them offerings and souls were delivered. Thus the religious orders contrived to exercise paternity over all the conquered family. The aboriginal race paid the Church the immense favour it received from her that saved their lives: so they knew and so they believed



Mexico.—Convent of St. Francis

abdicated their whole personality into the hands of the monks. And the worship of the saints being so very much apt to be fitted to the rites of their idolatry, they transferred them to the former, not all, but many of them, under the paternal care of the monks who, being unable to change their traditions or minds, substituted the idols by the images (they are tantamount) and erected sanctuaries on the very places where the sanguinary gods were adored, and little by little the Indians contrived to introduce into the holy urn of christendom all the superstitions they had before and they received by this sacrilegious and inevitable grafting. Therefore the Indians, in spite of being christians, have not ceased to be idolaters; and their idolatry dyed in black the religion of creoles and mestizoes. To save the vanquished family threatened with extermination, to suppress the bloody rites, to kindle the light of hope in the souls of the bond people, such is the work of the great christian missionaries in New Spain: this work is not the only one, but it would have sufficed for the life of three centuries. The new work, all of emancipation, is that of the suppression of all superstition; this work, divine too, has been intrusted to science,

to the school, to the teacher. Oh, if, as the missionary was a schoolmaster, so the schoolmaster could be a missionary!...

Peter de Gante who taught the Indians what he knew himself and what, ignoring their language, he could communicate with astonishing patience, how to read, write, pray, sing, play several musical instruments, probably in order to rid his pupils of the *teponashtle* and the *chirimia* that must have contributed so much to maintain among them the ferocious instinct they satisfied by their interminable wars: Martin the Custodian walked bare-foot from one coast to the other preaching incessantly with the aid of an interpreter, because he never was able to learn any of the native languages, preaching, above all, by the sublime eloquence of the example, of humbleness, of charity, of poverty and of tears, these two men are types of that epoch of fervour and boundless self denial.

But together with them or little later there appeared the men who systemized, as it were, the christian apostolate, having a clear consciousness of their mission not only as propagators of the Gospel but also as redeemers of the Indians. There were many of them, they were legion; they preached not only here, but in Spain too; not only to the Indians, but to the conquerors also; not only before the despots of New Spain, but before the Monarchs at their Court; amid that admirable group there stand out four bishops, four men who by their charity and their faith sealed the titles of the paternal power exercised by the Church over the conquered people: Las Casas, Zumárraga, Fuenleal and Quiroga; the first of them excels in that century in which all humanity seemed to grow taller, he is a gigantic moral figure, the man of an idea, viz: «The Indians have a right to be christians, consequently they have a right to be free; conquest is therefore the perennial violation of a right: it is the duty of a good christian to undo the work of iniquity.» Come to the Antilles at the dawn of the XVI century he was equally conscious of his vocation as an apostle and as a priest; before the primates of the Spanish Church, before the Council of Indias, before the monarch, he claimed the Indians' right to liberty, but with so much eagerness, so much fervour, in terms so absolute that they astonish us even to-day by their humanitarian boldness; the disappearance of the conquered race in the Islands, owing to the ill usage of the conquerors, had left indelible traces in his soul, having been an eye witness of the catastrophe. In his bishopric of Chiapas converting and sheltering the Indians: at the Court where he obtained the promulgation of the famous New Laws that put a sudden end to the presumed rights of the conquerors converting them into simple duties; in Mexico, where he communicated his incensing zeal to others, he caused the declaration to be made that the Conquest had been permitted by the Church only to make christians, not vassals or slaves or bonds; Las Casas, now obliging the monarch to intrust the acquisition of new lands to the preachings of the missionaries, now urging viceroy Mendoza to dispose actual attempts of pacific conquest by means of the monks, now writing vehement pamphlets or the inestimable History of the discoveries and conquests, never abandoned his work, never got disheartened in his blessed labour of charity. The hatred of the conquerors and even of some monks (Motolinia) was always pursuing and stirring him. He was a great christian and we, Americans, deriving from both *encomenderos* and Indians, prove to be rather descendants of the former than of the latter, scanting homages and monuments to the Spanish

dominican; he perhaps exaggerated and extolled the essential goodness of the natives and the badness of their extortioners, but not so much as is proved by other documents. At any rate this class of men who in good faith exaggerate and overdo the picture of evil are necessary in epochs of crisis; thus the remedy though it be deficient, comes soon.

Zumárraga, the first bishop of Mexico, nominated protector of the Indians as had been Las Casas, was full of religious zeal apt to lead him as all other converters of his age and of all ages to take inhuman measures in order to reach his aim (destruction of idols and perhaps of documents, too, and condemnation of a stubborn Indian to be burnt); nevertheless he deserves a preeminent place among the defenders of the conquered race, among the pacificators; his behaviour against the tyranny of the first Audiencia, a tribunal of merciless men who permitting every sort of abuses with the Indians, seemed to be bent on their extermination, was heroic: he declared the bishop was the only judge of Indians in virtue of his charge as their protector and hence the struggle that acquired terrible proportions between the civil and the ecclesiastical powers; the latter defending justice and right, and their side, even with their usurpations, is espoused by History which at the risk of being unfaithful to her aspiration to remain purely scientific, i.e. scrutinising and grouping facts impassibly, cannot always divest herself of the moral character.

When that tyranny had ceased, Zumárraga devoted all his zeal to raise the souls of the Indians, his idea being this. The proof of the native being a perfectly rational creature is that he is able to rise to the lofty summits of pure reason. So he founded the College of Tlatelolco, an actual normal school where the future teachers and converters were bred and where the discussions on theological and philosophical questions were so ardent that they frightened, like a devil's work, the adversaries of the instruction of the Indians; he also founded a college for the education of Indian girls, but this was unsuccessful. All this was apostolical and wise: its purport was that as Cortés had availed himself of the Indians for the conquest of empires, so they might serve the Church in her conquest of souls.

Ramírez Fuenleal, president of the second Audiencia, was, after Cortés and more than Cortés, the man who applied all the power of his authority to promoting the welfare and re-



Friar John of Zumárraga

demption of the Indians; it was he that inaugurated the hardly ever interrupted era of peace during which Mexican nationality was slowly forming and growing.

Quiroga was the companion and chief collaborator of bishop Fuenleal; we already saw him pacifying the Tarascans by dint of kindness and justice and organising, by a curious distribution of work (one trade in one borough), the industrial wealth of Michoacan, his future bishopric. There, as before in Mexico, this saintly man established colleges and hospitals, the latter being ingenious trials of christian communism, episcopal *phalansteries*, as we already stated, constructed and ruled to alleviate the misery of the Indians, «misery seldom seen or heard of, suffered by the poor orphan and wretched Indians who sold themselves and allowed themselves to be sold, and the young and orphans were and are stolen by the elders to be sold and others go naked about the *tianguis* waiting to eat what the pigs left» we are told by Quiroga himself. In those establishments they tried to conjoin the tendencies to communal life and the constitution of collective personalities particular to the indigenous family, with the initiation in full civil life and cooperative work. Communism, it is well known, far from being the form of the societies of the future, is a social form of the past.

It was these illustrious men who guided and directed the great work of pacification; they limited the power for evil of the rulers, they restrained the rapacity of the masters created by the Conquest and appeased and tried to lift the conquered. Peace and civilisation were synonymous.

The work of the pacifiers admirably seconded by the religious orders, was being adulterated when the apostles disappeared; after the initiators there came the organisers and then the extortioners. When the danger incurred under the task of converting the barbarous tribes that like a girdle of movable and unsteady sand surrounded the conquered land stimulated the zeal and roused the spirit of sacrifice, the monk became once more a missionary the nimbus of the apostles and martyrs shining round their heads; but when the generation of the Conquest christianised willingly or unwillingly, converted in masses not so much by the preachings as rather by the submission of their chieftains who surrendered themselves (for which reason it has been said quite right that on the head of emperor Cuauhtemoc the Aztec world had been baptised), when this generation, in the middle of the century, was followed by another that had been born a christian one, the monks had no other than routine work to do and were dropping from their extortioner hands many of the great conceptions put into work by the Quirogas and Zumárragas. Then the moral sleep of the large native family began; where it stood, at the foot of the altar, there it remained and in our days it still lies in large groups, in the same state, with the same customs and the same superstitions; the whistle of the locomotive must ring a long time in the Indian's ears to rouse him out of his sleep, the school must prompt the truth into his soul for two or three more generations in order to set it agoing.

When the dispositions of the kings put the conquered race into the hands of the monks, the dominion became an object of rivalry and struggle among them. The Franciscan contended with the Dominican who being arrived later hastened his steps to reach the rank of his predecessors; the Franciscans always stood against the abuses of the authorities, the

Dominicans sided with them: the former were the liberals as we would say now; the latter, in spite of the immense services they rendered the Indians at the Court, were conservatives. Later on, a struggle arose between the monk and the bishop who wished to eliminate the regulars from the parishes and put clergymen in their place; the monks resisted deeming this an usurpation; they had sown and watered, others came to reap. Meanwhile the whole country became covered with temples, seldom artistical ones, nearly always solid and costly ones. Costly? No, not for their constructors: the Indian, pupil and beloved son of the monk, received from his fathers (the *padrecitos* as he still calls the priests) not only the hard correctives fathers in those times were wont to use on their children, they were not only frequently cudgelled, but by little and little they had for them the immense passive obedience they formerly had for their *caziques* and priests; this obedience converted them into actual bondsmen and these serfs were employed in the tremendous task to erect churches and convents without receiving any salary or food. Archbishop Montufar, an intelligent and impassionate man, passed the condemnatory sentence over the behaviour of the monks in this regard; he has told the unbearable load that fell on the shoulders of the native race through these constructions and the terribly paternal abuses of those who in reality got themselves fed and lodged by them whose protectors they professed to be.



Friar Bernardin of Sahagun

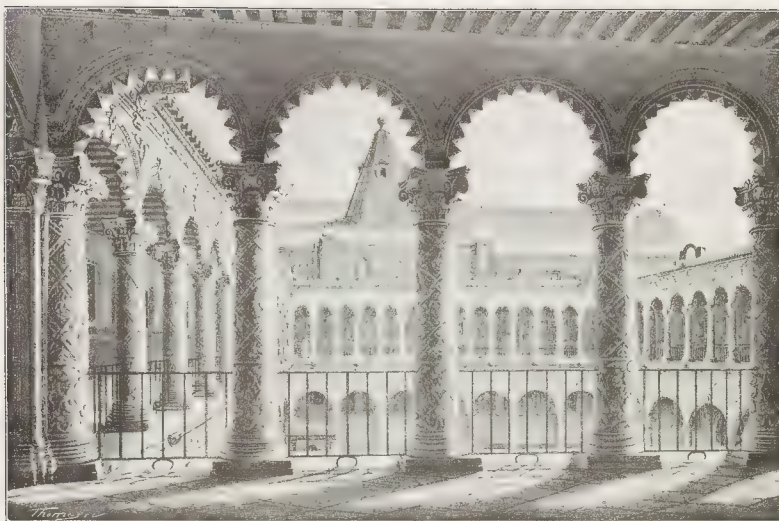
Little by little, not without trips, the Church went on making her social domination normal and ordinary; Dominicans and Franciscans conciliated with one another in the routine enjoyment of their privileged situation, of their blissful well being, in the peace of absolute conformity of the conquered race and that born from it. The secular clergy, bred at the Universities or in the Seminaries, shared a part of the power with the monks at the end of the century. The vehement primitive disputes about the validity of the baptisms made almost without any other ceremony than aspersion and a short prayer by the first missionaries, by virtue of the apostolic faculty they had received from the pope, were ended, they only were an historical record; the marriages that had been made so much fuss about in the first years of organisation, because of the polygamy of all the *caziques* to whom their vassals or *macehuales* delivered their daughters «like fruit» as a chronicler says, that they might serve them as wives and as servants, it proving very difficult to designate her who was to take the

rank of the christian spouse, also had ceased to be a matter for discussions, since the bull of Paul III and above all, since the generation of the Conquest had been followed by a new one.

The Mexican Church, already at the beginning, held their meetings, since that gathered under the auspices of Cortés, when New Spain was under his control, up to the Council convoked by the second and third archbishops who instituted a canonical organisation of the tutelage over the indigenous family doomed to an eternal minority. Therefore, at the time of the foundation, in Mexico, of the Inquisition, a tribunal which, perhaps here even more than in Spain, was the secret and awful council of the ecclesiastical government of the provinces of American Spain, with its train of secret procedures in the causes of those accused of heresy and of torments and most solemn *autos de fe*, they had ceased to be motives of disagreement between the Church and native Aristocracy; only in the zone that little by little was entering into the perimeter of obedience to Spain, this question of monogamic wedlock was cause of an opposition often carried to obstinate and ferocious war. The second and third generations following that of the Conquest managed to accomodate somehow the ancient customs to the religious prescriptions. At the middle of the century the Church had grown to be a tree overshadowing the whole kingdom; New Spanish society was like a climbing plant winding round that tree and thriving under its shade. The Church, to become self-conscious and to organise the sum of experience got in the moral government of its new patrimony, gathered their meetings, we already stated, at the beginning of missionaries, later on of monks and clerks, at last of bishops, the assemblies then being provincial Councils or Synods in due form, and of the four held during the colonial times, three met in the XVI century; by them the Church contrived to give a canonical organisation to the ecclesiastical tutelage of the native family submitting them to an eternal minority.

Philip II had made up his mind orderly to install the Inquisition in his New Spain; it was the indispensable complement of his political and religious work; the New World was to live by means of interior and exterior isolations; the Inquisition had for its aim to sustain this policy by all means; it was in the mental and religious respect what modern sanitary Councils or Boards of public health are in hygienic matters, the ideas were the microbes, the deadly germs against which people were to be defended. And if we imagine a group of governors for whom spiritual epidemics were of an infinitely greater transcendentness than physical ones (and rightly so), Inquisition is explained, but not absolved; the Author of the sermon on the mount never would absolve it. Here, as in Spain, the Inquisition had its splendid *autos de fe* witnessed with fear or enthusiasm by governors and vassals; there were many tortured people and many confiscate estates; some were burnt. Only the Indians, owing to their minority, were out of the reach of the dreadful Tribunal.

Already in the last quarter of the century, the fathers of the Company of Jesus, long sighed after in the Colony, made their appearance at Mexico solicited by a wealthy citizen and sent by Philip II in accordance with St. Francis of Borgia, general of the order. Immediately they got a temple and a house; there was a cazique who sent three thousand Indians to work thereat. The admirable pedagogic group that thus entered New Spain at the last hour, was not long in being as rich as the other religious institutions, it was to share with the other monks the influence over the natives and to govern nearly exclusively the enlightened class of New Spain. Hence consequences were to flow the Jesuits themselves never could foresee.



Mexico.—Courtyard of the Convent of la Merced

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

THE INDIANS. THE CREOLES. THE SPANIARDS. THE MEXICANS

BEFORE it was possible for the Spanish monarch to organise government in his just acquired America, the conquerors were the lords of the Indians. To turn their dominion to profit they maintained the situation existing before the Conquest: the native mass remained distributed as they were before under the control of the emperor, the great magnates and the *tlatoans* or feudal lords (generally these lordships were hereditary) called *caziques* by the Spaniards here as in the Antilles. In this manner Cuauhtemoc became converted into a vicar of Ferdinand Cortés. The tyranny of the caziques was irremovable, it stood firm in the tradition and in deeply rooted habits; women, property, all was at their disposal; they disposed at will of the lives and the liberty of their subjects; before the Conquest all this was mitigated by the needs of solidarity and mutual respect in war; afterwards when the Spaniards went on pacifying, there only remained the brutal extortion of the aboriginal masses by their lords who, although at first they used to rouse them into rebellion against the conquerors, generally shared their merciless despotism; one of the most gainful affairs of those days was the sale of Indians as slaves for mines, a business arrangement between the cazique and the Spaniard.

Cortés wished to distribute among his war companions all the land and population of

the empire following the system he had seen practised in the Antilles; gold and silver, the supreme object of the covetousness of the conquerors, proved to be scarce; the mines hardly began to be known and could be worked only wasting in the shafts thousands of human lives; the Indian was the chief wealth and Cortés shared the Indians among his fellows. These *shares* or deposits as the conqueror called them did not convert the Indians into serfs or slaves of the person to whom they were *intrusted* (hence the name of trustee, *encomendero* given to those persons): they remained free, paid their tributes unto the cazique who delivered them to the trustee less a rate (the maximum being two thousand dollars a year) taxed beforehand, the royal officers receiving the rest: it was the obligation of the trustee to care for the conversion and religious instruction of those intrusted to him. The share system was the only means to *maintain the land* as Cortés said, and this was true: the monks would never have realised anything lasting in American countries had not the sword opened their path. And the Conquest would have proved a failure if the conquerors, to whom the Spanish monarch was unable to assign allowances, had been obliged to emigrate in search of new conquests and new adventures and new plunders or had remained in the country as rebels, extorting the Indians without restraint and between these and the conquerors a duel of extermination had arisen. Cortés was right; sharing the land was the only means to conserve it.

However, this system was opposed by two classes of interests: one religious and another political. Religion objected as an eloquent and terrible matter of fact what had happened in the Antilles; the shares there introduced by Columbus had systemised the extermination of the natives, had unpeopled the archipelago: the brutal contact of an embryonic civilisation of the stone age and another of the steel age; the stupendous illuse of the limited forces of the indigenous had at length quenched them. Ought the same thing to happen in New Spain? It would not have happened, because here the conquerors had to deal with large sedentary groups and a more solid culture; that civilisation was no more an embryonic one: society was perfectly classed; rites were usually atrocious; the customs of the masses were good; they were social, i.e. moral. This was the chief cause why the Mexican people was not extinguished; had they been nomads like those the English colonists met with on the northern shores of the American Atlantic, they would have disappeared. But ill treatment could do much to come to the same end and the «trustees» finding the natives by their passive mood so much disposed to slavery and to the office performed in Spain by the beasts of burden, by their breeding abused them horribly. In the eyes of the religious this was sacrilegious; the head of the catholic Church had permitted the Catholic Kings to make the Conquest with the aim to convert the Indians and if the Indians disappeared, how were they to be converted? Millions of souls would be lost to Faith; it was the duty of the Church, and they obliged the monarchs to collaborate therein, to save that race, to save those souls: this and the great piety of the apostles, explain their conduct. The political interest was also immense; hereditary possession of the land and its population bestowed on the conqueror by favour or grace, was a dismemberment, a disintegration of the monarch's sovereignty and of political right, it was a *feudalism*. Such a thing could never be consented by the Castilian Kings who waged war against the semifeudalism of the Spanish nobility and boroughs; therefore they endeavoured to put out the trusts and then the heirships to trusts.

There were, beside the Indians allotted and presumed free (actually they were very little so in spite of the monarchs' good intentions), the *naborios*, personal servants who could be alienated by their master as true serfs, and the slaves, notwithstanding the great queen Isabella had forbidden the slavery of the Indians as soon as America rose to the light of christian civilisation.

In fact, the kings prohibited slavery and forbade allotting; in both things they compromised; they granted the slavery of war prisoners, of rebels, of persons sold by their parents or their caziques: these slaves went into the mines that began to be opened and there they died by thousands with their horrible brand on their cheeks. This condition became mitigated through the outcry of the missionaries, outcry heard by the world; through the reiterated orders of the kings; through the introduction of the negroes whom it was necessary to isolate from the Indians as they treated them worse than the Spaniards did. Later on, there came the beasts of burden, especially donkey the redeemer, upon which the Indian uses the same hardheartedness he was treated with himself. The acclimation of useful European animals (horse, ass, ox, sheep, dog, pig) and of culture plants like the sugar cane and so many fruits as are thriving here (apples, peaches, oranges introduced by that admirable chronicler Bernal Diaz) changed the face of the productive lands; thus viewing things only from this side, the contact with European civilisation was deeply transformative, that is to say it was an absolute evolution marking the definitive way for the Americans; it was progress, a partial form of evolution.

Cortés left the orders of his sovereign unfulfilled; he allotted natives and allowed them to be allotted; the sovereign admitted a compromise with Cortés on the base that trusts ought to be temporary and the natives well treated. Afterwards, the incessant activity, the complaints of the apostles, the attitude of the heads of the Church in Spain, the declarations of



Philip II

the Pontiff, the ardent zeal of Las Casas, produced, when the viceregal governments were being installed, the famous *New Laws* that came to suppress the trusts of civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, utterly limited those of particulars, forbade them to be conferred or renewed, almost entirely suppressed slavery, etc. Here also the monarch was obliged to compromise; the revolt in Peru had been a terrible lesson; it proved impossible to suppress this regime; they must be satisfied with mitigating it and monks and viceroys devoted their zeal to this task.

New dispositions were being made effective with the aim to oblige the natives who by withdrawal had eluded the action of authority, to unite in villages, in congregations, to become sedentary, in sum, and civilised; this was very little successful and gave opportunity for most serious abuses. More efficacious were the measures advised by the religious orders that considered the indigenous race their own, purporting their isolation from the Spanish groups in order to avoid all contact between them, even between the trustees and the folk intrusted to their care. This was a serious evil of fatal consequences. The native family could have fully assimilated the new culture only by transformation, i.e. mingling with the blood of the introducers of the new spirit, and this met with infrangible shackles in the isolation system.

The ardour of the first apostles was soon followed by the monotonous extortion routine of the monk of the second and third generations after that of the conquest, who lived in peace and good harmony with those who actually conserved the dominion over the rural population although they received no tribute nor got trusts. Superstitions had changed their flag but not their essence among the native group and sucked all sap out of their spirits; it was useless that a few individualities, a few groups attained the superior culture of the epoch in the Colleges and Universities founded by the Spaniards; they were merged among the conquerors and their descendants. The large mass were mental vassals of superstition and vice; the vice of drinking that afterwards afflicted the vanquished family much more than it had done before the Conquest and which though by special circumstances of occupation and medium it has maintained a certain animal vigour in a human group destined to moral growth by their faculties of character, has caused it to be atrophied in a kind of spiritual rickets luckily not yet incurable.

The contact with the conquerors, the hardheartedness of the «encomenderos» and afterwards some terrible epidemics that seemed destined to prey on them specially, reduced, during the XVI century, the subdued native population by some millions.

The creoles, i.e. the Spaniards of America, formed soon the root-stock of a group that was to constitute a special element in the composition of the new society; of this the Mexican group arose; however, in the beginning, he was mutinous, fond of innovations, inquisitive, implacable extortioner of the natives and after going so far as to conspire and foolishly express the desire to get emancipated from the Spanish monarchs who did not recognise their rights over the people acquired by their fathers (conspiracy called «of the sons of Cortés»), they little and little dropped off into idleness, vices (game and luxury) and indolent acquiescence to anything. Notwithstanding, the creole never gave up this conviction: «the Spaniard, lord of the American countries by right of conquest (then considered superior above all others).

is the creole; but the creole, like his fathers the conquerors and first settlers, is faithful to his king and therefore he obeys him and his representative the viceroy, therefore he respects him and wheedles him. But he is an aristocrat, a nobleman, he has ancestors, a genealogical tree, and despises the Spanish new-comer who is either a usurper of the offices due to the creole by right of birth or because it was so disposed at the beginning by the kings, or he is an inferior because he has neither the good breeding (refined manners, sweet amiableness of the submissive, honey-mouthed smoothness in social intercourse with which he has become contaminated by the language and eternal passiveness of the native, influence perhaps of the utterly mild, luke, caressing climate) nor the instruction which the creole, when a lawyer or a clergyman, has acquired in the colleges, scarcely ever frequented by the merchant, the miner, the agriculturer, coming from Spain.»

This, at length, rises to be a creole in his descendants and usually gets ennobled buying titles from the famished Spanish treasury and enters into the same secret rancours, the same vices and the same attachment to the country considered quite as Spanish as Old Spain, as entertained by his congeners. The Spaniard who comes to office and passes, takes no more roots than of contempt and deep hostility. Frequently he endeavours to get rich and is successful. Another Spaniard is the clergyman; this generally is a man of great virtue, of profound theological lore; he is a friend of the creole's; he raises him in social consideration, in friendship to the Church, that receives from him innumerable gifts: in the college, in the University, in charitable works she always engages him into, in donations to the king she frequently pushes him to make.

One of the first viceroys ordered the children of Spaniards and natives to be sheltered in asylums in order to receive the education they ought to have; it was a question of unfortunate folk. This was the first attempt to group the mestizoes, the new family born of the two races, the *Mexicans*. Marquis Mancera (25th viceroy) already describes them as an important part of the population and praises them, in the century following that of the Conquest. This proves that they increased slowly, through the systematic isolation of the two races: it was the Mexican nationality that was to be converted into a nation by agglutinating to the *mestizo* nucleus as the viceroys said, whilst we persist in calling it *Mexican*.



Ruins of the church of the Franciscan convent at Tlalmanalco

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

GOVERNMENT OF CORTÉS AND HIS LIEUTENANTS. THE FIRST AUDIENCIA. THE SECOND AUDIENCIA

New Spain was born independent: Cortés exercised a kind of absolute government limited by his position and his self-interested desire to enter into normal and definitive relations with the Metropolis; when these relations were established, the king sanctioning his work and legalising his titles, he continued ascribing himself the power he deemed convenient; he was the actual arbiter of the land; the first legislative, as it were, dispositions that came to him from Castile (relative to the distribution of shares), were like a dead letter for him; he disobeyed them. Unluckily his adventuresome mind thwarted and spoiled all his political plans; he possessed remarkable faculties for a man of government, but he was unable to cease being a conqueror. Therefore, the warrior empire of the Aztecs hardly acquired and not yet pacified, having hardly traced and deficiently organised the nucleus (Tenochtitlan) whence his programme of pacification and administration was to irradiate (about this matter Cortés had most practical ideas as is proven by his letters), he carried into effect his march to the shores of the Caribbean sea in search of new empires of fabulous wealth.

In Mexico he left his lieutenants: two of the four royal officers sent by the Court and one licentiate a friend of his (those licentiates were law oracles) were to compose the governing triumvirate that ought to proceed in full harmony with one Rodrigo de Paz representative of the interests of Cortés. On receiving the news of the first disturbances Cortés sent, with full powers for a determined case, the two other officers going along with him. These men of strong fists and brutal covetousness meant to become masters of the field; they were the collector of tributes (factor Salazar) and the inspector of same (controller Chirinos): those who had remained at Mexico were treasurer Estrada, bastard of king Ferdinand as he said and auditor Albornoz.

After the arrival of Salazar and his companion at the town scarcely built up, hardly disencumbered of rubbish, with the Indian wards not yet quite organised (small churches and large houses in construction as abodes for the town council, for the monks of the custody of friar Martin of Valencia and the best arranged for the servants of Cortés) an era of disturbances began which well nigh frustrated all the endeavour to consolidate the Conquest.

In order to fight against one another and to make the town council an instrument for their unjustified ambitions they availed themselves of the authority of Cortés on which all of them founded their wrongs and misdemeanours; this, however, vanished in the Hibueras; the news of Cortés' death being circulated, solemn exequies were performed and the wives of the soldiers who had gone with him were allowed to marry again; Cortés' proxy, Rodrigo de Paz, refusing to allow Salazar and Chirinos, who with the exclusion of all others exercised an uncurbed dictatorship, to seize the property of the Conqueror which being believed to be fabulous were an object most ardently coveted, was assaulted in Sir Ferdinand's own house that was plundered by the assailants and reduced to prison; as Cuauhtemoc was tormented by Cortés, so was the substitute of this by the Spaniards wanting him to reveal the secret where the conqueror's treasures were hidden and then bleeding and maimed they led him to the scaffold.

After the death of Paz the Factor and his accomplice commenced to share anew the Indians shared before hand by Cortés; plunder and arbitrariness were their only rule of conduct, and it needed all the energy of the angelical Franciscan custodian and his monks to prevent all this to end in a dreadful extermination of Indians or a general revolt of the conquered. When truth began to be known and news arrived about Cortés and at length an envoy of his made his appearance, his friends, under the shelter of the Franciscan convent, concerted an insurrection of the people, seized the tyrants and exhibited them shut up in cages at the chief market place. The royal officers discarded by Salazar, recovered their authority, but the conspiracies, executions and violences continued until Cortés returned amidst an immense triumph and hailed as a saving angel.

The Court, amazed when learning what was going on in the new colony, called Cortés to Spain and intrusted the government of New Spain to a tribunal analogous to that which so successfully ruled the island of Hispaniola under the regency of bishop Fuenleal; it was the most suitable thing to be done: the question was to resolve the many conflicts that had arisen from the sharing of the Indians and the distribution of the shares, to define so many rights and to do justice unto the conquered whom the kings wanted to be considered as

subjects but not as serfs, with so firm energy that only a group of upright judges invested with full dominion over the public force could possibly carry out the programme.

Unluckily the realisation thereof being intrusted to men of measureless violence and rapaciousness presided over by ferocious Nuño de Guzman and counselled by the famous Salazar and Chirinos, turned out to be a series of numberless vexations and extortions. As before Martin of Valencia, so now bishop Zumárraga, we already stated, interposed him-



Sir Lewis Velasco 2^d

self between the despots and their victims, not mildly and meekly, but availing himself with a most energetic zeal of the weapons of the Church, the excommunication and the interdict and even the popular risings. The measure of iniquity had grown brimful. Fortunately Cortés loaded with honours returned from Spain resolved to employ all his enormous ascendancy in the service of the second tribunal sent from Spain under the presidency of the illustrious Fuenleal and so the new Marquis (of the Valley of Oaxaca) actually did. The government of the second Audiencia calmed the zeal of the monks, checked the pretension of Cortés to make an excessive use of his rights and repaired the harm undergone during those calamitous

years by the oppressed indigenous family towards which the venerable heads of Fuenleal, Quiroga and Zumárraga inclined surrounded with the nimbus of the saints.

In the year 1535 the first viceroy arrived. The Council of the Indies, now definitively organised, had become aware that, in order to strengthen the justice of the Audiencia, to overrule the rights claimed by those who had won the land and to overawe the pretensions of the Church that attributed herself the absolute proxyship for the conquered family, the colony needed the presence of the monarch himself embodied in a vicar, in a viceroy; therefore they sent to New Spain the sensible and excellent Sir Antony Mendoza, of illustrious

lineage, but more interesting than by his ancestry, by a certain tragical reflex thrown upon him by his sister, the heroic widow of the vanquished at Villalar, Sir John Padilla.

We have expatiated somewhat beyond the proportions allowed by the equilibrium of our work, with the purpose to characterise the elements, all of them most interesting, that were to enter into the composition of the new organism; we wonder if we have succeeded to give a precise analysis and to show how those components lived in history. Before going on we wish to sum up in a short sketch our impression like him who concentrates his looks better to appreciate the whole of a rather diffuse and inharmonious picture.

The centre is the conqueror group formed by men of insuperable vigour of character; they stamped their seal on the work and the stamp was everlasting, they were conquerors: they wished to rule a vast empire, to dominate a numerous group of people, to substitute with a superior culture that in many regards inferior one they met with; so they quickened the slow steps of the indigenous evolution and produced a revolution. But out of this revolution there came a Dominion, not a Colony. The conquerors disdained turning to profit by themselves the riches of the conquered land; they were not born for such a work, they had not fought with that aim; they were warriors, not direct undertakers; profiting was organised by means of the conquered race, it was the exhausting of the vanquished whom with seemingly dissimilar aims the group of pacifiers or redeemers of the Indian disputed to that of the conquerors. The compromise was come at on the ground of the more or less legal and slowly becoming benevolent servitude of the Indian, of his submission to the tutelage of the Church watched by the civil authority; of his agreement to a state of minority that diminished his burdens but also hindered him to get out of the *statu quo*: the indigenous family was the first thing amortised by the Church in America; it was an immediate good: it was, by the sole fact of its lasting, an evil becoming worse and worse from generation to generation.

The conquering population agglomerates at Mexico where administrative bureaucracy refreshes it incessantly; and by scanty groups spreads along the southern coasts of the Gulf in search of lands situated between the dreamt of gold and the sea, that is to say, between commerce and mines, the two supreme aspects of their dreams of drawing profit out of the earth. Mines there were none thereabouts; an agricultural wealth which they were unable to dominate, but whose germs (exotic plants and animals) they strew carelessly over the land, retained them there in rickety groups; on the other hand the great commercial road from the Centre to the Gulf, from Mexico to Veracruz, got peopled with relative rapidity and so were in the interior of the country, above all, the mining centres. These settlements of masters went on increasing with creoles and mestizoes; around these focuses of money-making, as it happens with the cellular nuclei of organic protoplasm, a new world was being set up whose acting was regulated by the conqueror's soon rusty but ever feared sword, whilst their moral life was under the control of that sword's cross.



Veracruz. — Castle of Ulua (present state)

VICEREGAL PERIOD

CHAPTER FIRST

SOCIAL GROWTH

(XVI AND XVII CENTURIES)

PATERNAL DESPOTISM OF THE HOUSE OF AUSTRIA; THE ORGANISERS: MENDOZA, THE VELASCOS. PROGRESS OF THE CONQUEST AND PACIFICATION; COMPROMISES AND SOLUTIONS; POLITICAL TRIALS; AUDIENCIAS AND SURVEYORS. CONSOLIDATION WORK IN THE XVII CENTURY. TERRITORIAL GROWTH; SETTLEMENTS. THE MARQUIS OF MANCERA; FRIAR PAYO ENRIQUEZ. THE CHURCH AND THE STATE; CONFLICTS. SOCIAL GROWTH: PUBLIC WEALTH; EDUCATION. PASSAGE TO A SUPERIOR STATE

THE viceroy was king; his mission was to «maintain the land,» i.e. to keep up at any rate the dominion of the sovereign over New Spain. To conserve the land by pacifying it; hence the intimate connexion with the Church; the Church, by virtue of the privileges granted by the Pontiffs to the Spanish monarch in America, may be said to have been dependend upon him; this was called *the royal patronage*; but the importance the Church had acquired in Spanish America, *because by concerting she consolidated the work of the Conquest* made her the supreme collaboratrix in government. The viceroy, maintaining

VOL. I.—PART SECOND

Political history

Sir Antony Mendoza. Friar Peter of Gante

Las Casas

Count of Revilla Gigedo. Sir Antony M.^o Bucareli y Ursua

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF NEW-YORK
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME



authority, kept up the whole authority of the king; hence the struggle against those who wished to lessen the king's power over the vassals making them their own slaves or tributaries whereas the king wanted in America free men who paid their tribute *directly to himself*; the House of Austria exhausted her historical period in Spain without achieving this endeavour. The truth is that considering the whole new realm as a trust of the king administered by the viceroy, the monarch ought to conform himself to the type of the good trustee, that legally created by the Council of the Indies: a father who watched for the conversion of the Indians, who would not exact from them any work without remuneration, who would respect their liberty and aid them in their misfortunes. It was thus most of the viceroys of the xvi and xvii centuries understood their missions; all had good intentions, many realised them, a few were superior politicians understanding wonderfully the needs of the society they were going to rule and contrived to find the proper means to satisfy those needs.

The first viceroy, the two Velascos and Martin Enriquez were first class agents in the immense toil of definitively organising a society that was so beforehand, for centuries, by her history and which the encomenderos or conquerors intended to disorganise in order to feudalise it in their own behalf and which the Church endeavoured to reorganise not as a civil society, but as a theocracy.

An herculean task was the viceroy's; several of them were not equal to it and sought to accomodate the performance of their duty to their personal thrift. Others were not so; others had from the first a great prestige of their own; we have just mentioned their names; their prestige was due to their great probity, their severe conduct towards the Spaniards founded on the correctness of their private life, on their paternity for the conquered race, on their dignity before the Church: in sum, they were men of character which in public men is almost genius and being true statesmen they proceeded by means of compromises and acts of authority to impose them.

Mendoza came invested even with ecclesiastical authority, being allowed to punish bad priests. New Spain hardly coming out of the epic period of the Conquest, the great conquerors still living and planning all of them new enterprises and the viceroy deeming necessary to widen the dominions of the kings, a good deal of his labour was employed to supplant the gigantic adventurers like Cortés and Alvarado and put in their place the normal and direct action of the royal authority he represented himself. To consummate the work of the Conquest, removing the limits of the Colony as far as might be, submitting the Southern sea (the Pacific) to the control of the viceroys, settling once for all the destiny of the social classes in New Spain, founding towns, fostering religious centres of future provinces, such was the programme of the viceroy; it remained an heritage for his successors.

His conquests in the Occident which he directed personally were due to the staff of monks that accompanied him rather than to his soldiers; his explorations towards the North in search of chimerical empires brought about, in the course of time, the rickety settlements beyond the Bravo; in the Pacific the definitive seizure of the Philippine islands was his work. In the interior he had advanced, partly owing to the New Laws that somewhat mitigated the material lot of the Indians, opening a free path for the action of the surveyor who came to impose the new Code of freedom although endeavouring to use the utmost mode-

ration in its appliance. In sum, the colony came out of the hands of the first viceroy nearly organised. The two Velascos, viceroy Enriquez, proceeding in concord with the Church, continued the work; the question how to suppress the commendams was modified; in fact, it never was resolved by a general measure: however kings, viceroys and monks contrived to introduce more benevolence and justice between commendatories and tributaries; yet, it was time that transformed the commendam system, notwithstanding frequent renovations, and out of a fragment of political power converted it into mere ownership of the land to which the Indian actually was bound (and he still is so in many districts) like the serf attatched to soil.



Drainage of the Valley of Mexico.—Cut of Nochistongo

But, before all, slavery in the mines needed urgently to be destroyed: Mendoza attempted this task, the first Velasco carried it out: «The freedom of the Indians, he said, is a matter of more importance than all the mines of the world and the nature of Royal revenue is not such as to oblige to trample under foot the laws divine and human.» These words deserve to be engraved on bronze plates for the pedestal of a statue. Founding hospitals, establishing a University wishing it to become the *Alma Mater* of the Creole society and which bestowed on New Spain the rank of an intellectual power, endeavouring constantly to ameliorate the condition of the Indians, subduing and pacifying the central regions of the Tableland the steps of which labour were marked by nuclei of future towns, such was the work of the second viceroy. Others continued it; on the transition from the xvi to the xvii century the second Velasco fills up the history of the Spanish American empire.

The town of Mexico, centre of the viceroys immense organising exertions, drew from Spain a good deal of its male population incessantly diminished on the other side through the Austrian monarchs' European wars. However, that centre was the starting point for every thing; huge buildings sprang out of the ground, especially religious ones, at whose shade the town spread in right lines, almost mathematically traced according to the four cardinal points; from time to time the lake of Texcoco that was the collecting reservoir of the whole lacustral region of the Valley, regained its primitive extension over the lands Tenochtitlan and Mexico had conquered from it and the capital, in spite of its mound causeways and canals, was threatened to disappear by a misadventure: Velasco and almost all viceroys of the first two centuries attempted to preserve from ruin the town, daughter of Cortés, transferring it to higher levels or delivering it from the jeopardy to die suffocated in the mud by means of an artificial, at least partial, derivation of the waters of the Valley; then this was the chief business, in this the viceroy concentrated all his care and thence arose the tracing and utterly slow execution of the drainage of Huehuetoca bespread with so much gold and dramatic peripetia.

When the danger was overcome, the viceroys renewed the struggle with the nomad hords of the central plateau which the second Velasco pacified definitively, the struggle with the privileged religious communities that in their roll as masters and fathers in Christ of the indigenous family stepped in the way of all laical jurisdiction; the struggle with the owners of allotments which the unsteady policy of the monarchs did not allow to reduce into a definitive system of obligations and rights.

The most difficult part of the viceroys' mission was certainly that regarding the relations between the conquerors and the conquered; the ideal, so to say, was this: there were to be no Indian slaves, but only negro slaves, the Indians were to be rid of mine work, the tributary Indians on the allotments or shares ought by all means to be maintained in freedom; they were to be paid good wages and never to be employed as beasts of burden, not even with their consent. Besides, and in this the monarchs and some of the viceroys during the century following the conquest insisted with perfect right but quite unsuccessfully; they wished, and even obliged the Indians to form congregations, to dwell in settlements where they might be converted, watched and civilised and where it would be easy to collect the tribute from them; but this proved to be impossible they returning to their mountains, their lands, their savage freedom or they died of sadness and sometimes had recourse to suicide. It was a great pity that this attempt was not a successful one; the settlements founded in this way disappeared: some like Irapuato and Silao probably were repopled by Spaniards.

Moreover the tributes exacted by the king were increasing; the king, in order to maintain his position in Europe, which position was also a colossal adventure needed money and more money. One part was yielded by the mines, the other was to be furnished by the Indians: they arrived to Spain with irregular intermitteces, because sending silver to Spain was also a terrible adventure: corsairs and winds turned every voyage into a tragedy.

Some care must be taken too with the ever increasing exigencies of the conquerors' sons who were mestizoes most of them and who thought themselves entitled to all the colonial posts and above all to those relationed with the Indians, aldermen, mayors, etc. The just remarks of the viceroys determined the monarchs to order that in the bestowal of offices

aptness for the service was the first thing to be considered. By this, there is no doubt, social justice was winning; but the descendent of the conqueror, either creole or mestizo, always deemed himself bereft of a right and never would pardon being neglected.

The monarchs attached great importance to the Audiencias, even after creating viceroyalty. They acted as substitutes of the viceroys and generally their rule was unwise; thus when, after the death of the first Velasco, the Audiencia of Mexico entered upon government and became aware that the discontentment of the sons of the conquerors assumed a shape hostile to the king's authority in New Spain and that this hostility had for its centre



Peter Moya of Contreras

the very son of Ferdinand Cortés, Marquis Martin, who was the natural head of creole aristocracy, the governing tribunal made so much fuss about what probably was but trifling of giddy-headed youths, contriving to convert the whole sport into a formidable conspiracy for independence that banishment, death on the scaffold, prison, torment seemed too little to frighten society and to maintain the submission of the country. Commonly, however, the Audiencia sheltered the commendatories against the viceroys in consequence of their origin and their interest, not a few of the Magistrates of that Court of Justice being convicted of prevarication. Philip II having imposed on the viceroys the obligation always to consult with the

Audiencia, these became overbearing putting their hands in the rule and administration of the new dominions. In New Galicia rich by its population and its mines and nearly self-supplying, there was also an Audiencia with such arrogance of independence and sovereignty that at times they set their faces against a viceroy, not even shrinking from raising a civil war in defence of their jurisdiction.

But the institution which, however modest in its origin, gained in certain cases a verily extraordinary importance, was that of the visitors; they were dictators, in the whole stress of the word, and before them both Audiencias and viceroys lowered their flag. They had power to destitute and punish, from the viceroy and lords of the Audiencia down to any official, and being judges without appeal they were allowed to inflict capital penalty on whomsoever they thought guilty of felony. There were visitors like Muñoz who, in virtue

of these faculties, stained the capital of New Spain with torment and gallows, and wanting to procure his master king Philip II among New-Spaniards the same sinister prestige the Duke of Alba was giving him in the Netherlands at the same time, he established a regime of terror, with the aim to quench even the remotest glimmer of the idea of freedom of which they supposed they had caught a glimpse in the conspiracy of the intimis of the Cortés family. It was necessary to snatch the tyrant from his prey by a fulminating order of the king; yet we must consider that however dreadful the work of Muñoz may have been, no good but doleful consequences would have come out of an emancipation of New Spain made by the commendatories; had it been achieved it would have been a disaster: either immediate slavery and destruction of the natives or a renewed dominion of theirs; both events would have quenched Mexican nationality in its germ.

Of course, not all the visitors were bad ones; there were some of them, for instance Moya de Contreras, whose severity was wholesome. This priest united all the powers of New Spain in the last decade but one of the XVI century; he was inquisitor general (it was he, as we told before, who established the Holy Tribunal in Mexico), that is to say, the king put into his hands the favourite instrument of his policy, that which assured him the control of the souls; then he was made archbishop, afterwards visitor and after the death of the Count of La Coruña viceroy and captain general. Hard on abuses, severe towards prevailing magistrates, terrible against royal officers (several of them were hanged), he was sweet and kind towards the indigenous. His spirit animated the third Mexican Council that put all the threats, then of infinite prestige, of eternal death between the Indians and their tenacious extortioners.

In the XVII century the elements put into practice by the Spanish rulers in order to subordinate or assimilate definitively the cultured groups of America exerted their utmost energy; but Spain ceasing at that same epoch to be a first rate power, having foolishly squandered her wealth and her blood, ceasing to be a great maritime power without ceasing to be a great colonial power (an absurdity that must bring about the destruction of her American empire), never being able to become a true coloniser owing to the scarcity of her rural population, the result was a paralisation of the development of New Spain; all things get consolidated, but by this consolidation, things become as it were, amortised in the routine and *statu quo*: the XVI century is a century of creation, the XVII century is of preservation; the following is of decomposition; underneath these apparent phenomena social growth continues its slow course.

At the beginning of the XVII century all the colonial boundaries were still uncertain; between the seas that surround the territory and the already organised provinces there remained some groups hardly subdued and which viceroys and Audiencias endeavoured, with a rather mediocre success, to bring over to civilisation. On the North the viceroys, sometimes obeying definite orders from the Crown, fought to widen the New Spanish dominions driving beyond the tropical parallels the numerous Chichimecan hords which at last withdrew into the mountain ranges forming those two diverging branches between which the Mexican table land is gradually sloping down, and marking the boundaries of the conquered territory with a system of forts or garrisons several of which became in course of time im-

portant settlements. The submission and pacification of those tribes never happened to be complete, every now and then it was to be renewed; the missionaries, above all the jesuits, were the apostles and martyrs of the gigantic attempt to shut up the North of New Spain by an immense zone stretching from California to Florida; many times they pacified without the aid of arms; other times they were the cause of revolts by their exigencies, obliging the Indians to be contented with only one wife and waging an unrelenting war against wizards and sorcerers, perennial fosterers of idolatrous superstitions among the natives; these insurrections that burst out not only on the North and West, but also on the South of Oaxaca and of Yucatan, were always bloody and always quenched, but never wholly and thoroughly. New provinces like California, New Mexico or Texas, the Nayarit, began to be organised in the subdued regions; other provinces (like the ephemeral one of Guadalcázar that owed its name to a viceroy) were established in the centre and numerous towns sprang up everywhere. One of these, Córdoba, owed its foundation to the necessity to keep in respect the negro settlements already numerous in the hot districts and prone to rise in arms in order to shake off slavery. There were revolts or attempts to revolt that gave a motive for actual hecatombs witnessed by the horror stricken people of the capital of the new kingdom. This girdle of territories half subdued, occupied, abandoned and frequently reoccupied, maintained the security of the Spanish domination over the immense area comprised amidst them and was after all, a work of consolidation. The names or titles of several viceroys of the xvii century are preserved in the names of several towns of the present Mexican republic: Guadalcázar, Córdoba, Cadereita, Salvatierra, Cerralvo, Monclova and others.

In the second half of that century two remarkable viceroys ruled over New Spain: the Marquis of Mancera and the archbishop Enriquez of Rivera. The colony was in great jeopardy when the Marquis was intrusted with its government; the abuses seemed ineradicable, the prestige of authority was decreasing, the silent disdain of the creoles for the Spaniards from beyond the seas was increasing, the dangers from abroad (pirates and corsairs) paralysed commerce and communications with the metropolis; the Court incessantly exacted pecuniary aid employing the sums in unsustainable wars and foolish spendings; it was the epoch when the military power of Spain was nearly dissolved by the nascent European hegemony of the France of Lewis XIV and her maritime power was undone, the reign of a child began, weak of soul and body, symbol of the unhealable decadency of the house of Austria and as tutrix of this child Queen Marianne of Austria governed first by the sly jesuit Nithard and afterwards by the smart Andalusian Valenzuela who died banished in Mexico, and continually thwarted in her rights and favours by the ambitious and brutal bastard of Philip IV, John of Austria. In fact, Spain seemed to be agonising, too.

Mancera who began his rule in the last days of Philip IV contrived to repair all with that diligent intelligence only a man of superior qualities is able to display: he helped Florida pecuniarily, supplied Cuba periodically with food, promoted new explorations in California, applied his care to good government in the Philippines, organised a navy able to help the Spanish squadrons at their arrival and at their departure, and gave military succour to those who struggled in the Antilles with the pirates; he gathered large donatives to be sent to the Court (he being the first donor) and with the same object, he collected great resources. This could be done only increasing the tributes; in order to make them less onerous,

he cut down abuses, he tried to reestablish in their pristine vigour the dispositions relating to the complete freedom of the indigenous; he opposed the illimited increase of the negro trade, an odious fountain of resources for Spain; he repressed the mismanagements of the aldermen and mayors in the mining regions where their misrule had diminished this branch of wealth; he repaired and fortified the two ports of ingress and egress of the mercantile current that passed through New Spain; he devoted his attention to works of public usefulness like the partial drainage of the Valley which was continued by open cuts; he concluded the interior of the cathedral of Mexico and was a protector of the University, of literature, of authors (his wife was a great friend of Sor Jane Agnes of the Cross, the most remarkable poet of the colonial times as Ruiz de Alarcon was the sole great dramaturgist). Mancera had visited the European Courts as a diplomatist and his great endeavour was to prove to the civilised world that the Spanish domination in Mexico was not a placard of ignominy for Spain, that the native population had not diminished in the xvii century, that the creoles were heartily addicted to Spain (not to the Spaniards, to the *gachupins* as they began to be called); that the new population, the mestizoes, were apt to constitute a social group destined to become more important every day.



Philip IV

Friar Payo Enriquez of Rivera, related to the Spanish nobility, was archbishop and viceroy; he continued and bettered the work of the Marquis of Mancera. Pacification work on the North grew more and more difficult; the indomitable tribes of those districts would concert and attack the Spanish settlements with a fury comparable only with the heroism displayed by the citizens (defence of Santa Fe of New Mexico, its giving up and foundation of Paso del Norte). These revolts and those in Chihuahua and Sonora were constant; it

seemed as if Spanish dominion in those regions were to be always precarious; indeed, the principal labour of pacification was done by the jesuits who never shrank either at distances or at martyrdom. The archbishop-viceroy on the immense territory of New Spain that lived in peace, surrounded by insurrections and pirates, displayed an unexpected energy in correcting abuses of those intrusted with the conservation of the fisc, he purified the administration of justice, he watched for the Indians and spent his income on works of piety and beneficence.

We have chosen these two viceroys as types, not because they did something extraordinary, but because they mark well what Spain in that epoch was able to do in order to maintain her dominion in America, defending herself abroad, keeping up order within and making herself beloved by the subdued population and by the new society. The defects of a state of things built up on so frail a basis could not be corrected, but they were attenuated and modified by such men as we have brought into prominence in this historical synthesis.

The Spanish kings capable of foreseeing by themselves as Charles I and Philip II, had understood the immense part the Church was to perform in the acquisition of America for the Castile crown and they had got themselves authorised by the Pope to dominate the discovered lands under the obligation to convert their inhabitants; and when they called the religious communities first and all the ecclesiastical elements afterwards to collaborate in their gigantic work, they took care to reserve for themselves expressly the government of the American Church, excepting, of course, all questions of dogma and superior discipline, by means of a series of concessions granted by the Pontificate to monarchy and which constituted the *royal patronage*: cession of the tithes (ancient canonical tax) in exchange for certain pecuniary obligations of the State towards the Church, necessity of a permission of the authority to erect bishoprics and parishes, to build churches, monasteries and hospitals, to introduce monks or priests into the colonies, the nomination of bishops who would begin their functions, as Zumárraga did, before the Pope had confirmed their election; determination of the limits of the bishoprics; *presentation* for every benefice or ecclesiastical employment (from the bishop down to the sexton); faculty to rebuke and punish the servants of the Church and to inhibit the action of ecclesiastical tribunals; necessity of royal consent (*placet*) to carry out orders of the pontiff; competence to resolve ecclesiastical doubts and controversies, such were the elements that composed the king's supremacy over the Church of the Indies; here the king was, in fact, a substitute pontiff.

But at the shade of these rights and acknowledging them, the Church, great fellow author in the work of domination, had acquired an immense power of her own; if the king governed her, she actually governed the Indies; in spite of the complaints of town-councils, viceroys and sometimes of bishops, her spiritual power had increased in the same measure as her territorial power; convents multiplied amazingly; the number of the clergy was ever augmenting; a good deal of the population eluded in this way the performance of the principal of colonial duties, marriage, the multiplication of families. All the communities, all the churches augmented their riches unceasingly, the secret of the irresistible ascendancy of the Church has consisted, as formerly in catholic Europe, so now in protestant America, in adding to her spiritual power the material power of wealth.

This is certainly a wise compromise with the necessities of the world where there is no kingdom of the heavens, but struggle for life sometimes so like the kingdom of hell; part of those riches were certainly destined to succour the poor and to foster, alas! mendicancy, the mortal vice of people grown up under the shade of the convents, it is certain also that another good part served as a bank for the necessities of particulars and of governments that under most advantageous conditions of interest and terms got incessant loans out of the inexhaustible stock of money of the Church and that in this way it was possible for beneficence and instruction to exist in the Colony; but it is not less certain that a huge mass of wealth, monopolised and indefinitely increasing in the hands of a corporation, constituted by the fact itself, a problem of a double aspect: the political one, because if wealth is power, there was no doubt but the Church had the power and the State, willingly or unwillingly and in spite of the patronage, was indeclinably subaltern to the Church; and the economical one, it being impossible there could exist more than a most scanty circulating wealth around the enormous mass amortised in the hands of the Church; for without a circulating wealth social growth cannot but be rickety and unwholesome.

This evil was perfectly understood by the statesmen of those epochs; that problem was formulised quite precisely at the end of the colonial times; in order to defer its resolution indefinitely the Church effected the independence of the colony; the struggle to resolve it on behalf of the civil power is the key to our historical evolution in the present century; the Republic was unable to enter into the path of progress and full contact with civilisation, until, in the third quarter of this century, she contrived to resolve the problem definitively.

The Church, submitted to the dominion of the king who had allowed her to increase being unable to do otherwise, converted the immunities and privileges she had received from the king, into a weapon for her own defence and a means to consolidate her chartered rights and so dared to face the viceroy's authority.

So it happened with the first viceroy who governed New Spain in the reign of Philip IV, Count Priego: a priest brought to trial by the civil authority alleged ecclesiastical immunities were violated in his person; the archbishop interfered, the viceroy withstood seconded by the Audiencia; the prelate excommunicated the authorities, laid the town under an interdict and withdrew with the clergy: the viceroy ordered him to be arrested; a popular tumult arose, part of the palace was destroyed, the viceroy fled, the archbishop returned triumphantly to Mexico. The viceroy never came back from Spain although it was acknowledged he was right; he had little moral weight; the archbishop was removed, the fosterers of the tumult were punished severely; but the inquisitor sent by the king to ascertain all of it could not but become aware of several things: that the clergy was omnipotent, that adhesion to Spain meant adhesion to the Church, that the popular masses abhorred Spanish domination, accepting it only in the form of supreme government of the Church, that the Church, indeed was the *instrumentum regni*. Was it possible for such a situation to steer another course?

Frequent, in fact, were the conflicts between civil and ecclesiastical authorities degenerating pretty often in serious perturbations of order: on the other hand it is not less true that every time when a public calamity caused people to revolt, the clergy formed the moral army of a government nearly always unprepared and without a material force to oppose a revolt. So it happened in Mexico at the times of Count Galve when the insufficiency of crops

causing misery and famine provoked a dreadful tumult, when the natives crying *long live the king and death to bad government* (the same cry a century later was raised by the natives roused to rebellion by Hidalgo) set on fire the palace and the houses of the aldermen and would have destroyed a good deal of the town but for the interposal of the priests and monks who appeased the crowd.

But the Church herself was undermined and certainly not by heresies or judaisms, to these the jails and burning places of the Inquisition put an easy end, but by the eternal contention between the secular clergy and the monastic orders, commenced, as we already stated, in the times of the second archbishop of Mexico and reaching its most ardent period when the Company of Jesus had attained the culmination point of their power. The population, and sometimes the Audiencias too, supported the monks; but the Court never ceased to order the viceroys not to allow the presence of monks without a license in the Colony, to restrain those who slackened their rules (already a very common thing) and even to demolish the churches and convents erected without a permission; very little was obtained by the bishop, almost nothing by the viceroys.

In the middle of the xvii century the episcopal see of Puebla was held by John of Palafox, well known at the Court for his romantic origin, his gallant youth, his political cleverness; at the Universities for his great intellectual gifts and in the Church for his virtue, his energetic character and his Navarrese tenaciousness. He came to Mexico as bishop of Puebla, accountant judge of several viceroys and visitor general. When the war for independence of Portugal broke out, the viceroy Duke of Escalona, who by his extraordinary pompousness, his protection of prevaricators and agio-jobbers and his covetousness scandalised New Spain, was suspected of sympathy towards Portugal; so the Court of Madrid, making the visitor Palafox an archbishop of Mexico and viceroy at the same time, put into his hands the means to depose the viceroy and to effectuate or to attempt serious reforms in the corrupt administration. When he had given up his two temporal commissions, he returned to Puebla where, endeavouring to recover all the scanty faculties and rights of his church, he stumbled on the most extensive privileges of the Company of Jesus and entered into a tenacious struggle against the same whose end was not far from being a tragical one. There were preachings of the jesuits against the bishop, exactions, decrees of suspension and episcopal excommunications, illegal nomination of judges to decide the quarrel, sentences of these judges against the bishop with approval of the viceroy (Count Salvatierra), ceremonies of interdict celebrated in the Cathedral (erected by Palafox with amazing rapidity), riots, flight of the bishop and final decision of the Court on behalf of the prelate who was rewarded with an episcopal see in Spain, leaving in New Spain indelible footsteps of his talent and integrity and of his love for instruction. The Jesuits, in spite of all, went on thriving.

The seigniorial regime implanted in New Spain was yielding all its fruits at the end of the xvii century. Native population was no more decreasing, the Mexican part was visibly increasing, the creole class (of which some mestizo families, offspring of the conquerors and the indigenous nobility, formed part) followed the same way in a slower manner, having at their head a colonial nobility of which there scarcely remain some relics in present so-

ciety, the ancient titles represented therein having been bought by former peasants, trades men and miners, of the humblest lineage, from the famishing Court at Madrid; very few of them have been deserved by good service done to colonial fatherland and therefore are worthy of respect.

Creoles and mestizoes, being sons of two warrior races, every time when they were called to fight nomad Indians, civil insurrections, corsairs and even invaders of the territory of other Spanish possessions (so it happened in Jamaica and St. Domingo) took arms with enthusiasm, fought with bravery and sometimes covered themselves with glory vanquishing European troops (the French in St. Domingo). Such moments being over, all returned to rest: the Creole to show his horses and plate, to game incessantly at all public festivals, nearly always religious ones and at particular ones also; some few followed university courses; the Mestizoes imita-



Mexico. Deputation House (present Town-hall)

ted the Creoles in the towns or in their petty industries, filling the colleges, the seminaries and the University in order to be able to attain the high posts of the Church (in the xvii century there was a Mexican archbishop and a superior-general of the Dominicans) that sometimes refused them and at other times admitted them alone; the poor creole or junior son, the mestizo and hardly an Indian constituted as lawyers, priests or physicians the intellectual aristocracy of New Spain.

The land was incessantly allotted and reallocated; the Indian villages and communities possessed in common, scarcely ever individually, as before the Conquest, the land around the settlements; the Spaniards and their descendants frequently attempting to dispossess the Indians, they defended themselves with extraordinary stubbornness and these lawsuits were interminable; they went up to the Audiencias, they appealed to the viceroy and were victims of lawyers and pettifoggers. The king had distributed the territory, that was his own in virtue of the right of conquest, to some as gift or reward (the lands of the natives belonged

to this class) and to others by more or less fictitious sales, when the lands were commons or unappropriated. The ground of New Spain might have been covered with the acts and deeds of the lawsuits that arose from this distribution of the land. The result, two centuries after the Conquest, was: amortisation in the hands of the clergy and corporations of the greater part of landed property; constitution of large, sometimes immense, properties in the power of a small number of owners; these properties or *estates* were cultivated only in part; the chief culture being the cereals or grasses besides the regional cultures such as maguey: several industrial cultures, that of the mulberry for instance, were prohibited. On these lands the Indian toiled, as he still does on many of them, for a salary of two reales (five pence) a day (the classical rural char wages), which, in reality, he received in the shape of seeds, of brandy, of pulque; the remainder of his earnings found their way into the Church (alms, wax, ex-votos). But was there an earning for the labourer? No: there were debts chiefly contracted for these expenses: for those of the family, clothes, and food were insignificant, the latter never going beyond maize, french beans (very nitrogenous and nourishing) and a stimulant, red pepper, as poultry and pigs only exceptionally formed part of their food. The debts were ever increasing, they never could be paid; the native never paid and by this system that did not infringe the letter of the beneficent dispositions of the Indian legislation, he was maintained in the state of servitude: he was the servant of the property passing with it from heir to heir, from seller to purchaser, he was (and in many districts still is), the serf attached to the soil, to the sod.

The chief produce of the farm was maize, American corn by excellence, that which had allowed the foundation of civilisations in the North of precortesian America, because it had been the ground of the establishment of sedentary social groups of cultivators and which, unknown in the civilised countries before the discovery of América, now is forming, every day on a larger scale, a considerable part of the old world's food; the french bean that completed maize by its nutritive force (united with maize it is of double or more value than all the nutritive elements of wheat) and also seems to be of American origin and wheat imported by the Spaniards and which is a synthetic article of food (as is milk) but was beyond the reach of the rural natives. The adaptability of the maize plant to surroundings facilitated its production in all the climates of the scale from the sea up to the plateau. Owing to maize and the abundance of grasses, cattle, horses and sheep brought from Spain in small numbers, multiplied prodigiously, at first yarded and afterwards at liberty, forming immense herds, especially of horses that fled towards the North together with the nomads and helped those tribes to maintain their shy and fierce independence. Barbarity on horseback escapes from the action of civilisation, the latter generally succumbing to the former when they come to clash; afterwards perhaps it dominates mentally. Spanish government was obliged to institute special tribunals to decide all the questions concerning wild cattle which were called *de la Mesta* like those existing in Spain to the same purpose and which through their privileges made themselves odious.

Agriculture both on the *hot lands* tilled by the mestizoes of African origin and by the negros (producing sugar, tabacco, cotton, all of them on a scanty scale) and from which the pure indigenous little by little became excluded (excepting the isthmian regions and their prolongation as far as Yucatan and a good deal of the Pacific coast) and on the *high*

lands was hardly sufficient to supply the interior want. Then the successive loss of crops in one region, in consequence of the bad distribution of the cultivations, their scantiness and the lack of roads of communication brought about famine and its mournful retinue of epidemics and riots from Yucatan as far as Jalisco.

The chief fountain of economical energy in the colony was mining, especially since the discovery of the system of amalgamation of silver and quicksilver. The native, at the beginning enslaved by the miner, but obstinately emancipated by the viceroy who thus snatched him from death, mine anæmia killing the natives rapidly, yielded his place to the negro and the mestizo who were stronger and nimbler. Mining, chief fountain of wealth of the country, invested its produce in agriculture (the wealthy mine owners became lords of vast estates) and in fostering commerce and religion, and a little in public beneficence and instruction. There being a good deal of haphazard in it, a kind of game of chance, then more so than now, it became the adventure which the Spanish adventurers after the Conquest and their descendants undertook with passionate eagerness. The chimerical empires with rivers of gold, dreamt of by the Spanish contemporaries of Cortés, proved to lie hidden under the ground, were subterraneous, true infernal empires; substantially the spirit of adventure consisting in confiding happiness to good luck at any risk instead of expecting it from regular work, survived, owing to the mines, in the hearts of the New Spaniards.

Quicksilver coming only from Spain maintained colonial mining under dependency on the mother-country that sent this metal in periodical fleets on whose arrival the momentaneous life of the mines was dependent and in whose distribution presided by the viceroy or his agents favouritism and venality reached their maxima.

The commerce of metals, cochineal and hides directly with Spain (intercolonial commerce being forbidden) and of Chinese fabrics with Asia constituted the exterior aspect of this motor of wealth (movement which transmutes into heat i.e. into luxury, commodities, pleasures, welfare); interior commerce, without natural roads of communication, with artificial intermediate stations and the classical encumbrance of excise (but recently suppressed by the best of the managers of public revenue Mexico ever had since the Conquest up to our days) scarcely existed.

The discovery and seizure of the Philippines by Spain was the most transcendental feat in the history of commerce during the xvi century, after the discovery of America. There the most advantageous staple for the intercourse of industrial Asia with Europe through America was established: at the Parian (Manila) an emporium of this commerce was arranged; at Acapulco the second market was settled and the third near the coast of the Gulf. Mexico enrolled the goods on their passage, made a selection of them and the country became rich in fine china and splendid silks, which constituted the decoration and luxury of creole homes. Then the Asiatic merchandise together with the American took the course of the Atlantic Ocean when the fleet that had brought the European manufactures, the Spaniards employed at the offices or at the Chandler's and quicksilver, set sail to return to Spain.

This commerce enriched the European and American Spaniards in America, it enriched, or rather fell into the Danaïdes' vat of, the royal coffers, but did not enrich the Spanish nation; their industries, the most flourishing in the world in the epoch of the discovery, was forsaken by the soldier who went to Italy, to Germany, to Holland; by the emigrant who

went to make a fortune in the mines of America; by the enthusiast or the idler who sought shelter in the convents there and here. The love of working tended to disappear in the same measure as unconquerable pride and harsh covetousness were increasing. The industries of western Europe filled the void left by Spain and not leaving more than a tribute in the royal treasury, the fabric passed through Custom house at Sevilla steering to America.

But while the maritime power of Spain was decaying in the xvi century, a formidable conspiracy was organised spontaneously, at some times without an agreement of the respective governments, at others under their direction, against Spanish commerce, and continued during two centuries. France, England and Holland had an active part therein: the seizure of Jamaica, one of the Antilles, by the English, the conquest of the splendid Portuguese colonies of insular India by the Dutch, gave a definitive organisation to this colossal enterprise of international plunder in the Pacific and still more in the Mexican Gulf. To tell how the corsairs, even in times of perfect peace between Spain and France or England, set up and how they maintained their establishments, from the Antilles to the isle of Términos (the Carmen); how they deposited the robbed merchandise, in epochs of international peace, on desert islands where even Spanish merchants came to take their provisions, would require a special History, as also the tragical peripeties of the pirates' incessant assaults on most of the coast settlements from Florida down to the Brazilian parallels. In New Spain it was above all Campeche and Veracruz which it was necessary to protect by unconquerable fortresses, that suffered dreadful depredations. This state of things was not long in becoming the regular course and smuggling was an almost normal mode of mercantile life in the colonies, being sometimes tolerated to such an extent that the ships devoted thereto, were allowed, under any pretext, free access to the ports; in the Antilles smugglers had their emporia where the merchants got their provisions. Such was the result of the absolute monopoly which Spain, like all European nations having colonies, implanted on their American possessions, although lacking the huge maritime power necessary to sustain that system. The result was an increase of the Spanish population in America, it being more advantageous to live in the centre of the production of colonial wealth, only riches of Spain, than at the site of consuming, more and more precarious and almost entirely transformed into a centre of transit of colonial wares and metals for the remainder of Europe.

Education, during the consolidation period, tended to foster the mental growth of New Spain, not always being successful in the attempt.

In their most just and civilising endeavour to unify the language kings and viceroys were persevering; with this aim schools were created and classes established at the University, at the colleges of the religious communities, at the seminaries; never, as is done by other nations, even nowadays, an attempt was made to forbid the use of the native languages and the nationalising of Spanish was intrusted solely to persuasion and dire necessity; much has been obtained in the length of time; all is not achieved yet, because government almost entirely ceased to attend to it and the clergy pursued the work rather slackly.

All classes, natives as well as creoles, but chiefly the Mexicans, recruited the colleges and the University which enjoyed the constant protection of the State. This institution was of the utmost importance; there the brain of the ever increasing Mexican personality was

formed, and there a soul was lighting. The higher education given to the Mexicans by professors come from Spain or born in the Colony as were most of them, was an utterly extra-scientific one, a most serious evil which was not remediable in that epoch and of which all civilised Europe was participant. This does not mean sciences were disdained: they cultivated mathematics, cosmography, surmised physics (still in their infancy); there were authors writing on particular points of science as Enrico Martinez (whose personal history attached to that of the first drainage of the valley of Mexico, is so singular), as Sigüenza and Góngora; the Jesuits produced some remarkable men of scientific curiosity, of practical knowledge. The sciences, so called in those times, were theology, philosophy, law; the enlightened class enlisted in one or both regiments, that of the clergy and that of lawyers. The Spaniards, especially the broad mass of the pure Spanish population, rather fond of lawsuits and juridical intricacies, greatly respected the lawyer, the *licenciado*; it was the shape in which they dreaded the New Spaniard, the native of New Spain; they were afraid of the tribunals, they had a deep-rooted fear of the already remarkable entanglement of legislation; it was a



Mexico. — Court of the ancient Consulate, now Office of the Secretary of Communications

labyrinth wherein anyone might easily lose his freedom and above all his estate, if he had no Ariadne aware of the guiding thread.

Theology, philosophy and even jurisprudence were taught with a medieval spirit; they were eminently scholastic, they were the triumph of the pure deductive method; and as the former two started from religious dogmas and jurisprudence from the axioms of Roman, canonical, Spanish and Indian legislations, without ever making free with them by even the slightest analysis or remark, all was reduced to infer syllogistical chains from those axioms; and the passionate exercises of the classes consisted in hiding sophisms within the dialectical intricacies with the purpose to have the pleasure to undo them afterwards or also in the endless labour of conciliating with one another some texts of the patrological books and the laws of the Digest. This mental defect dominated in the mind of the future directing group which Spain was creating, perhaps unconsciously.

Philosophy was missing; there was no contact with the ideas lit at the intellectual sky of the century of Descartes, Newton, Leibnitz; there was no actual knowledge, owing to

the most summary refutations, in school treatises, of the great philo-sophical systems of antiquity; thought was lacking wings, being thus unable to live beyond the chrysalid state; that new people's soul was to be abortive. The tremendous intellectual closure wherein that society lived, a most high impenetrable wall watched by a black dragon, the Holy Inquisition, that never allowed the entrance of a book or an idea missing its sinister stamp, produced, not atrophy because in reality there was no organ since there never had been a function, but the impossibility to give birth to scientific spirit.

The lack of philosophy contrasted with the plentifulness of literature; there were swarms of poets, in colleges and churches, literary festivals were frequent and in them verses in Latin, Spanish and Mexican were served profusely to the hearers. No stroke of genius, something ingenious and sentimental, enough to produce an aesthetical emotion there was in Jane Agnes de la Cruz. The man of genius, may be the only one produced by Mexican Spain, a true creator fructified in Spain, was John Ruiz de Alarcon. The dramatic performances inside and outside the church were like those which the great Spanish theatre produced in its origin and at which our remote forefathers rejoiced: they had a bad taste. And young nations like the Mexican that formed their intellect by the conjunction of dissimilar souls, do not contrive to imitate more than the frailties, the vicious exaggerations of the strong nations that contribute to reengender them; whilst the new soul was being formed, and it cannot be said yet to be formed, their diffuse and profuse literature could not be more than a rather veiled reflex of the light shining beyond the sea. Serious literature there was only in historical chronicles like the great work of Torquemada: *The Indian Monarchy* and in descriptions of travels.



Madrid. - Royal Palace

CHAPTER II

THE XVIII CENTURY

THE HOUSE OF BOURBON: IMMUTABILITY OF THE REGIME. REIGN OF CHARLES III.
THE JESUITS. THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION; ESSAY OF TRANSFORMATION OF THE REGIME. THE LAST
VICEROYS OF THE CENTURY. SPANISH REVOLUTION AND ITS COLONIAL REPERCUSSION.
NEW SPAIN AT THE END OF THE ANCIENT REGIME

THE classical distinction between colonial history under the house of Austria and that of Bourbon, is a factitious one; there was no change in either political or economical or social regime. Mexican society with their defects (their frivolousness) so nicely observed by the Duke of Linares, their heterogeneous composition continued growing on the same line as in their beginnings. However, it was an actual and strong growth: the new organism had already got consciousness of its own personality, forming, ever since the xvii century and continuing so during the xviii century, a body apart: socially it was governed by an apathetic and profoundly corrupt clergy; there was no more distinction between the catholicism of the Indian and that of the Creole; all was but an endless series of devote practices, without any luminous substance; the creole as well as the Indian ignored their religion. The mestizo, certainly, had some glimmer of enlightened beliefs, owing to his essentially curious, restless, discontented and even mutinous mind and this was the leaven of Mexican society of the future. Two things may be clearly inferred from the observations of the sagacious Duke of Linares: first, that the clerical education and the joint feelings of the creoles and the na-

tives, ostensive in the former and recondite in the latter, deeming everything enjoyed here by the Spaniards was a usurpation of the rights of those born here (they called it robbery), gave every attack on property the character of a venial sin and imposed on all the charitable duty to shelter the thief, and facilitating amazingly imitation. *Catching other people's property* must have been a capital fault, Mexicans having been, and still being, so much abused for it by their countrymen and by foreigners: the contempt for individual property preached by the mendicant orders both by example and by word, is the origin of this evil. The second observation of the duke's was that a passion for *equality*, an absolute want of acknowledgment that the distinctions between rulers and ruled had another ground than injustice and force, was characteristic of the nascent soul of the new society; this was the psychological contingent of the New-Mexican, this was what lay at the bottom of his mind, what made him mentally repel every authority as long as he could actually do so. Not being able to do so, he acquired the habit of dissimulation and adulation; there is no adulation but implies despite, the expression of submission being exaggerated precisely with the purpose to hide the interior protestation. Unfortunately these congenital habits of the Mexican have grown to be a thousand times more difficult to eradicate than Spanish dominion and that of the privileged classes deriving therefrom. So great a transformation can be operated only by a total change of the conditions of working and thinking in Mexico.

Society, however, went on increasing: below, that is to say, in its least apparent part, by the mingling of the mestizo with the native; above, by the mixing of the Spaniard with the mestizo and the creole. The Spaniard thus blending was not the employee who came from Spain, it was the merchant, from the great monopoliser of traffic, him who formed the aristocracy of the wealthy, him who was governing by the Consulate (commercial court) down to *him who sold oil and cinegar* as the Duke of Linares said. It was this *storer*, on the coast and the central plateau who formed the substance of the Spanish-American mixture: utterly rude, merciless extortioner of the purchasing people, of the retailing merchant, faithfully accomplishing his compromises and, once enriched, perfectly honest, adorer of his Mexican family, scrupulous conservator of his habits, customs and routines, but most zealous to give his children the social superiority he had not been able to reach for himself, the *storer* (abarrotero), not the conqueror is the true Spanish father of Mexican society, with their laughable shortcomings and their solid virtues; the Mexican woman infinitely sweet and submissive, weak by the very strength of her love, admirably chaste and good, tamed that rude man and roused in him the nobility of character lying asleep at the bottom of that terrible struggler for life, in his ascensional period.

Linares (Ferdinand of Alencastre), Casafuerte (John of Acuña), Amarillas (Augustine of Ahumada) were viceroys of the same genius, of the same character and apt to render the same services as the best of those the Austrian monarchy had sent here; so there was no change at all in the outer aspect of things. The misgovernment of Spain during the reign of the great favourites and the crack-brained Charles II in the xvii century had not exercised any paralysing influence on government machinery in New Spain; it was too well mounted, for those times, to experience serious alterations. The agents of Royal power had relaxed a good deal in their virtue, greater abuses were committed, there were more scandals, more rapid fortunes were improvised and that was all of it, the spontaneous cor-

ruption of the corpse of Spanish royalty was contaminating all and so the men whose names have just been mentioned, stand out as extraordinary exceptions. The house of Bourbon when passing the Pyrenees, brought with their equipment the habits of minute administration and rigorous centralisation long ago established in France and wished to implant them in Spain and her colonial empire. But the constant wars were a hindrance for regular administration; all was let go as it went and the only endeavour was to find honest men to occupy the first posts in the colonies; they were not always successful in that enterprise.

And thus the first half of the century passed away; the viceroys were constructors of buildings remarkable for their epoch (Mint, Custom-house), of good roads: they performed during the sometimes terrible famines and pestilences that assolated the country the paternal role of directors of public beneficence; they pacified some districts which remained definitively subjected, such as the Nayarit within the jurisdiction of the Audiencia of Guadalajara, and in the Sierra Occidental the maritime and fluvial region that received the name of New Santander, on the littoral tract of the Gulf (Taumalipas); new settlements were founded, like Linares (New Leon), expeditions were sent out to Texas, a constant watch was kept for the defence of the coasts spending thereon considerable sums, and endeavours were made to send to Spain as much money as was possible and of which there arrived only the part not captured by the pirates and corsairs swarming on both seas.

Thus all things remained the same: in the intervals of peace with England (the reign of Ferdinand VI) it became necessary to help, with the largest quantity of money as could be gathered, the liquidation of the war period. Taxes were increased, collecting was empirical and arbitrary and the rulers as the first Count of Revilla Gigedo, augmented alike the royal revenue and their own. Alberoni's great attempt to restore the maritime powerfulness of Spain as a first condition for the security of a colonial empire, had proved a piteous failure since the beginnings of the century, and the absence of a watchful navy and the formidable growth of the English marine traced, with quite visible characters, on the sky of the future the destiny of colonial Spain.

If Charles III's innovating reign had been at the same time a pacific reign such as his predecessor's, perhaps Spain would not have lost her continental empire in America in so disastrous conditions as she lost it. But bent on his onerous alliances with France and animated with a kind of personal hatred against England, he subordinated all to the famous *family pact* and at the end of his long reign the balance was quite unfavorable for him and the dismemberment of the Spanish colonial power was clearly unavoidable. Of course, however great a king Charles may have been, and probably after Henri IV there was no better than he in the family; however great a king, not in the direct purport that he was a superior intelligence in political or administrative concerns, but only in the indirect sense, that by sheer honesty and good intentions he had contrived to understand some of the great necessities of the Spain of his epoch and to support with steadfastness the men able to remedy in part those evils, monarchic despotism did not substantially change; on the contrary it became still more absolute because it better organised the centralisation of power after the French fashion; but it gave up the patriarchal character of the Austrian monarchs to take

a rigidly administrative character; the tyrant was not a father, he was an omnipotent manager but subjected to rules of his own making.

The first care, by a natural instinct of preservation, was to establish a series of financial improvements in order to increase royal revenue; unluckily the supreme financial reform is peace and that only existed by intermissions. Notwithstanding; much was done

and planned; but the king's consellers, dominated by the spirit of the time (then a cyclone of negativist and destructive philosophy having for its focus the Encyclopaedia was blowing over intellectual Europe) were enemies of the authority of the catholic Church, being either fervent royalists or very little religious and the king was not perspicacious enough to become aware of the latter which would have hurt his christian conscience, but he was sufficiently possessed of the divine character of his power to accept willingly the ideas of the former. If they had been able to do so, they probably would have attempted since those very years the disestablishment of the Church in temporal matters, obliging



Charles III

her to transform her landed property, alienating it or seizing it in the name of the State under the condition to convert it into salaries. Nowhere such a thing was possible then, and less so in European or Colonial Spain; but one of the organs of the Church's power, the Company of Jesus, had grown so much, their riches, apart from all exaggerations, were so great, their power over immense social groups was so deep rooted that politicians considered it suicidal for the State to tolerate in its midst so great a power that could not be national nor wished to be so and was essentially antinational; and it appeared to the financiers it would be a radical remedy for the precarious situation of royal finances to sequester and sell the really colossal property of that institution which by their marvellous commercial activity had some points of contact with that celebrated medieval order of the Templars;

the examples of Portugal and France, that had dealt the Jesuits mortal blows, animated their Spanish enemies.

And it is a well known story: imprudences of the Company's putting in face of the royal patronage their privileges in the matter of payment of tithes granted by the Pope to the Crown in America, a pretext caught in the famous riot of cloaks and hats at Madrid that hurt deeply the king's susceptibility and which was maliciously imputed to the Jesuits; orders for the expulsion of the fathers and their servants at the same moment from all the Spanish dominions, executed with astonishing exactness every where and in New Spain by the most honest soldier, the Marquis of Croix, for whom blind obedience to the king and discipline was a religion.

There were protestations, murmurings, bloody tumults in this country: but at length all passed away and when the Pope suppressed the Company of Jesus, all must give in. The Marquis of Croix was right in what he militarily expressed in a famous proclamation where— in he gave notice of the expulsion: "Once for all that may come to pass the vassals of the great monarch who occupies the throne of Spain, must know they were born to be silent and to obey and not to discuss and express their opinions about the high affairs of Government." The persons capable to



Duke of Linares

measure the formidable dosis of despotism contained in this formula, apparently contradicting the first part of the proclamation being a summary explanation of the brutal act of Government, kept silent before the viceroy; but they opined and discussed at their ease in the sacristy of the rectory, in the parlour of the housekeeper, in the cell of the lay brother, in the refectory of the convent, in the corridor of the seminary, at the manor-house, in the saloon of the magistrate, in the drawing room of the marchioness and in the chamber of the bishop. The measure struck most people with awe, anguish and indignation, few understood the transcendency thereof: it was this: the enlightened Mexicans were mostly pupils or admirers of the Jesuits: the fathers of the Company while forming the classes in which the new national personality came to self-consciousness, maintained them addicted to Spain;

as we have already stated, the moral link of union between the mother-country and the colony, was the clergy and in the mind of those who considered and opined, it was the Jesuits; the immense services rendered by them to the Crown, because with a legion of preachers and martyrs they had conquered for her the Northern zone of New Spain, the illustrious names of the men who in the very moments of the expulsion were shining in their colleges (Alegre, Clavijero, Abad), made expatriation appear still harder.

The spirit of innovation was blowing not only to sweep away obstacles but also endeavoured to raise and realise a new political and economical programme in which there was not a single atom of liberty. The exigencies of the state of war wherein the Spanish empire almost constantly was living during the reign of Charles III becoming more urging every day, the Court resolved to take a step whose consequences, if they could not be foreseen, might have been forefelt from the beginning; to organise a permanent colonial army in substitution for the voluntary militia levied wherever and whenever a danger arose and dissolved immediately when the danger was over. From Spain there came officers, an inspector general who directly entered into quarrels with viceroy Cruillas (Joachim of Montserrat), and elements of instruction which very soon produced the wished result: being recruited by means of enrolment or by that sort of purloin or criminal sequestration called *lecy*, the army composed at the beginning of two or three regiments (foot and horse) and several pickets, one of them of engineers (artillery came afterwards) costed more than six hundred thousand dollars in 1765: so the Mexicans got their arms; they never unhandcd them since. Of capital importance for administrative concern was the visit made to the vicerealm in his quality as a visitor, but endowed with unlimited power, by Sir Joseph Galvez, future Marquis of la Sonora and Indian minister. The visitor's activity roused general admiration in Mexico; dry and severe but indefatigable he soon almost entirely nullified the viceroy's authority. His secret instructions precisely referred to investigate the truth of the formidable peculation imputed to Cruillas by his enemies; Galvez attended to all: to improve the military conditions of the vicerealm, to establish therein an honest finance system, although starting from ideas that would be deemed anti-economical to-day (monopolies, lotteries), but whose result was a constant increase of royal revenue growing in a few years from six to twenty millions, to definitively pacify and organise the northern provinces of California and Sonora, taking this task personally in hand, intrusting the missions to the Franciscans in substitution of the expelled Jesuits, intervening in every measure necessarily required to attenuate the consequences of the royal decrees that constituted great novelties in the country and brought about very serious difficulties, especially concerning the Jesuits and the sale of their confiscated and deposited goods (called *temporalities*) and the establishment of the tobacco monopoly wherefrom Galvez expected a very fat income for the Crown. However, in all things it was to be noticed, that the country was moving, desirous to protest, to shake off the weight that oppressed her, summed up in this phrase: The Spaniards do not allow us to partake of the government of our country and carry all our money off to Spain. Galvez's political and administrative projects, especially that referring to intendancies, were not carried out till later on when after his return from Mexico he was nominated universal minister for Indies. His aim was to render adhesion between the mother-country and the colonies

firmer creating a true administration of Spanish America, as properly speaking there had not existed such a thing before.

These men of Charles III had very vast aims, but to realise them it would have been necessary for the king to live fifty years more in a state of uninterrupted peace; may be, they would have gone as far as to effect the emancipation of the colonies, considering the most famous project of Count Aranda tendered to the king a few years after the Marquis of la Sonora had begun to realise his vast programme of administrative reform. In that document the count, prophesying with astonishing clear-sightedness the growth of the United States just born (1783), said: «Y. M. ought to get rid of all possessions on the Continent of both Americas keeping only the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico in the northern part and any other that may seem suitable in the southern part, in order to serve as a staple place for Spanish commerce.»

Unfortunately all the exterior policy of Charles turned round the *family pact* and thus he was doomed to incessant maritime war. History cannot make him a serious reproach thereon; the maritime growth of England foreboded the absorption of the

Spanish colonial empire; Spain was not strong enough to restrain that growth; an alliance with France seemed to equilibrate the prospects of success and that decided the orientation of the Spanish king's policy.

But the result was terrible: Spain was obliged to do two things of the gravest momentousness, creating a colonial army and helping the emancipation of the English colonies in America. The former was an evil because it absorbed the sap of the colonial budget admirably improved since the reforms of Galvez; because it awakened the military spirit, quite asleep in Spanish America, but latent in Mexican blood formed by the combination of two warlike and adventurous bloods; because an army, far from the centre of authority and obedience, is apt to turn oppressive or insubordinate; because it made the Mexicans con-



Count of Aranda

ceive the idea that society, already beginning to long for liberty as was shown by the inquiries made in the times of the Marquis of Croix, might find in their own country the military force necessary to realise those longings. The second thing, helping the English colonies, was an example that soon must claim the attention of the Mexicans: What was lawful against England, why was it not to be so against Spain? As a question of principles, of theory, of opinion among thinkers, independence, that is to say, consciousness of full virility, causing a social group to pass from under paternal power to juridical autonomy, was a phenomenon in full evolution here in the last third of last century.

Fortunately for Spanish dominion, the last viceroys of that century were, with one exception, good men and two of them most excellent ones: I mean Bucareli and the second Revilla Gigedo.

Croix was very hard, but honest and righteous; Mayorga, an occasional viceroy, governed during the war between England and Spain as an ally of France and the United States and endeavoured to help the governors of Louisiana and Yucatan who not unsuccessfully attacked the English at Panzacola and at Walix (Belice); the two Galvez, one an honest old man and protector of art and the other, a son of the former, an officer full of ambition for glory and popularity, who would have been a great viceroy but for his early death, represented the nepotism of the famous universal minister of the Indies. The swift succession of viceroys and the temporariness of high Justices and archbishops brought about no little confusion and disorder; Flores made exertions to correct all; he could do but little; the deficit was of more than a million, debt ascended to twenty millions; military resources must be increased more and more, New Spain had already her own intendant general of the army and royal navy (Mangino), a kind of minister for War and Marine who shared government with the viceroy; the remainder of the kingdom had been divided definitively into intendancies that were being implanted slowly finding a good deal of resistance. So we come to the year 1788; in the foregoing the tenacious reorganiser of colonial administration, Sir Joseph Galvez had died; in this Charles III deceased leaving a great record without being a great king and with him the aptitude of the Bourbon dynasty to produce men adequate for the nations they governed was exhausted. At the same time as the inept Charles IV mounted the throne, the second Count of Revilla Gigedo arrived in Mexico.

As we already stated, Bucareli and he almost reconciled Mexican society with Spanish domination repugnant to a great many of the new creole and mestizo generation and passively hated by the indigens, as every master by principle is hated by the servant. Bucareli was one of those men who by sheer goodness and zeal succeed in making appear good a bad system. It was this: the isolation, the want of communication between the Colony and the remainder of the world, became more accentuated since the rulers, unable to carry out an absolute reform of the colonial system that would have required a similar one in Spain herself, were greatly and justly afraid lest the contact of the colonies with civilisation would induce the colonists to shake off the yoke; and on the other hand they were aware that the longer the fatal moment would be put off, the greater the peril of an explosion would be; so they attended to the nearest evil and commended the remainder to time. A bad calculation. Be this as it may, Bucareli, notwithstanding his exertions to pacify the indefinite boundary

zones with Texas, Chihuahua and Sonora, where the nomad hords, clandestinely armed by the English, maintained a state of things equal to that wherein the centre was the day after the conquest and in spite of the increase of expenses, ameliorated finance gave wings to commerce which got an extraordinary increment during his epoch and raised credit to an unlikely degree. This was a lucky epoch in the Colony whose aspirations were silenced; it was the epoch when the most deserved archbishop Lorenzana, an angel of charity, established nurseries of succour for the most pitiable forms of forlornness, and gathered the fourth Mexican council to reproduce therein the proofs of evangelical zeal and love for the conquered that warmed the heart of the apostles of the XVI century.

Ten years after the egregious Bucareli Revilla Gigedo arrived. This man was of a wonderful activity and competency: Mexico was a large town, its inhabitants liked luxury, but as true sons of Spaniards and pupils of monks, they had no clear notion of police, of public cleanliness, of hygiene, of true commodity, indeed, of culture. All this the viceroy wished to transform and he succeeded in so much that some of his dispositions would still be beneficial for the capital of the Republic if they were enacted a new.



Florida Blanca

But he was not only the best edile Mexico ever had, he was also a great ruler: militia, finance, intendancies, tribunals, all was inspected by him, he laid his hand on every thing and always well. He endeavoured to render Mexican people selfconscious and therefore he created primary schools and fostered the superior ones; he protected historical and artistic studies, agriculture, mining, commerce, all this by practical measures, with true political sense. How comes it to pass, Bucareli and Revilla Gigedo have not their statues at Mexico, this owing them so much? Nay, in their times, the war cry of independence: *down with bad government*, would have been impossible.

The transition from the government of Charles III to that of his son, was a downfall, it was a leap into an abyss; the more and more urgent problem of interior reform stopped its slow and regular resolution; nor could it be otherwise: outward circumstances imposed

themselves with tremendous energy on a people that was ridding itself of its past without seeing clear in its future; there were administrative, no national, ideals; the outer circumstances summed up in this fact, war in either of these two forms: war with England and loss of the colonial empire or war with France (the France of the Revolution and of the Napoleonic empire) and shipwreck of the dynasty and national independence. To find a passage between these two terrible extremes the talent and experience of Charles III's statesmen would not have sufficed; these men were pushed aside. Charles IV was a good man, an inept and weak prince, absolutely unable to shake off the dominion of his wife; he was a lowered Lewis XVI. The queen whose ugliness, which Goya's realistic pencil dared not dissemble, was increased by numerous childbearing and age, combined with a remarkable intelligence and a surprising aptitude for intrigue a ferocious sensuality as ugly women's always is. Between the king and the queen Emmanuel Godoy makes his appearance, being a favourite of both; an unrestrained exploiter of the passion conceived for him by Maria Luisa, a supreme shammer who wanted to redeem before history his cynical bedroom grandeur with some good dispositions, lending him the mask of an enlightened and patriotic statesman. This favourite, raised to posts of distinction in the army, succeeded in disencumbering his way of Florida Blanca to whom we owed the excellent rule of Revilla Gigedo and who, daunted by the revolutionary doings in France, had given over his reform plans declaring himself an uncompromising absolutist; Godoy handed the power to Count Aranda who proved utterly unfit and almost unconditionally submitted to French policy; at last the favourite himself became minister at the age of twenty five years. His portrait, decked with his gallant military equipments, painted by Goya, renders quite well the courtier's immense moral nullity concealed by a sympathetic and sensual figure, after the style of that of famous Barras, the shameless chief of the French Directory. Under this regious trinity there began to shoot a poisonous plant born of all that filth and concentrating it in one of the most spontaneously vile souls history offers examples of, the young prince of Asturias, the future king Ferdinand VII.

Godoy, as soon as he felt himself officially master of the situation, began to do ostensibly what he had been doing secretly from the closet of H. M. the Queen, distributing offices, honours and public money among his relatives and favourites: that Court, defiled and corrupt to the marrow of the bones, contended the smiles and favours of the favourite. To this policy we owed in Mexico the administration of the Italian Branciforte (Michael of la Grua Talamanca), a venal man who came to viceroyship *in order to bring grist to the mill* as people say and to whose extraordinary adulatory aptitudes Mexico owed the admirable statue of Charles IV, a work of the Spanish artificer Emmanuel Tolsa wherein the disgraceful figure of Emmanuel Godoy's king shrinks and disappears under a supremely majestic and noble mask of imperial bronze. The prison and trial of Lewis XVI caused in Spain fright and indignation; his death which Charles IV endeavoured to prevent until the last instant attracting on himself the abuse of the Convention, provoked general stupor and then rage and craving for vengeance; enthusiasm was inexpressible and Godoy found himself at the head of a heroic people. The war in which the Spanish armies played the least unspeious part they could, ended in 1795 by the peace of Basle, soon followed by a treaty of alliance between Spain and the French Republic against England (1796). Godoy who

in all this assumed the air of a great general and a consummate diplomatist, was created prince of the Peace; this happened when war began in truth.

England began striking an almost deadly blow at the Spanish marine (St. Vincent), bombarded Cadiz, captured the most important island of Trinidad, near the mouth of the Orinoco, attacked some settlements on the American coasts, although unsuccessfully and commenced to spread in South America ideas of insurrection against Spain, and even fostered formal attempts like that of general Miranda (a native of Caracas who had fought with Dumouriez in the Revolution army) in Venezuela which failed. Branciforte prepared for struggle with England; the governor of Yucatan, O'Neil, attempted unsuccessfully the reconquest of Belice and in midst of the tremendous financial crisis provoked by the prodigalities of the favourite and the maritime war that more and more accustomed the colonies to live isolated from Spain, the king found himself obliged to dismiss Godoy restrained by universal indignation and the exigencies of the French; an honest ministry presided over by Saavedra and Jove Llanos came to office; immediately Branciforte was substituted by the enlightened Azanza who held the ministry of war in Spain; this pointed out the great importance granted there to the security of the colonies whose insurrection already formed an ostensible part of the plans of England and less apparently of those of the United States. Without the rising of Spain in 1808, Mexico and all Spanish America would have been, not an English colony, this was no more possible, but a *dominion* shared afterwards with the Anglo-American. Jove Llanos, who wished to oblige the Inquisition to keep restricted to the rules of common penal law, being thus nullified, soon left office and a crowd of adventurers and charlatans reinvaded all government posts. Azanza who had not been able to do more than arm the coasts and watch certain disquieting movements in the interior of the country (conspiracy of the knives) that were rather symptoms than dangers, showing that the idea of emancipation might easily find entrance into the Mexican brains, abandoned his viceroyship in the last year of the century. His successor, Marquina, also busied himself in watching conspirators and repressing strange risings of natives. Godoy, returned to power, although his condition as a favourite began to cool down, sent Joseph Iturrigaray to occupy the post of viceroy. The year before (1802) the treaty of Amiens had been concluded between France and Spain and England. This was an ephemeral peace, a truce: There was no conciliation possible between the interests at stake, under those circumstances: since the head of the State in France, dictator Bonaparte (lifelong consul and then, in 1804, emperor) became aware thereof, he intended to strike at the heart of England by invading that country; to do so he needed all the maritime resources of Spain which, in spite of having pactied its neutrality when the Amiens treaty was broken, in face of the exactions of France and the vexations of the English could not but submit to dire necessity and declare anew war with them. The emperor, for a moment gave up his attempt against England in order to face the coalition of Austria and Russia; while he vanquished this, Nelson and the English squadron dealt a death blow at Trafalgar (1805) on the maritime power of France and Spain that were making a supreme effort; since then this nation was unable to recover an important post among the maritime powers; her colonial empire was at the mercy of the lords of the sea.

Napoleon obliged by the Trafalgar mishap to renounce to an invasion of England, began

to consider the immense project to shut to English commerce the entrance into the European ports and to reduce by starving that merchant nation to solicit peace: this plan was called the *continental system*. Thinking Spain consisted of a profoundly corrupt Court, of the royal family in which the disagreements between the favourite Godoy and the prince of Asturias had acquired the proportions of a rebellion, of an ignorant people secluded from reformist ideas by the Inquisition, of public misery that was dreadful, of the perennial bankruptcy of the fisc whose deficit was increasing by hundreds of millions every year, he disposed of her at his will. Firstly he pushed her against the kingdom of Portugal that



Napoleon I

could be held an English dependency and which he distributed beforehand among some Bourbons of Italy, France and a future king of Algarbe meant to be Emmanuel Godoy. But the impopularity of the hated favourite increased from day to day at the same pace as the growing sympathy for prince Ferdinand and the immense prestige of Napoleon; this being such that when under the pretext of invading Portugal the French armies penetrated into Spain, the Spanish people applauded, believing they came to defeat Godoy. But soon things took another aspect; the emperor who putting aside his promises to Spain held Portugal

militarily occupied, possessed himself barefacedly of several strong places in the North of the peninsula and in the first months of 1808 his army advanced as far as Madrid. Then the royal family planned to flee to America and go to settle in New Spain as the Braganzas had done in Brasil.

The populace of Aranjuez, determined to hinder the flight, instigated by the partisans of Ferdinand and aided at last by the troops, succeeded in defeating Godoy and the rebellion caused at length Charles IV to abdicate in favour of the prince of Asturias who proclaimed king, made his solemn entrance into delirious Madrid and in presence of the French troops commanded by the Grand Duke of Berg (Murat). Napoleon, on learning this news, called all of them to Bayonne: the king and queen, the prince and the favourite, in order to hear and decide as an arbitrator; all went there and the abdication of Charles was undone and then renewed in favour of the French emperor who ceded the Spanish crown to his brother

Joseph. The people of Madrid answered such an attentate by the insurrection of the Second of May; the insurrection was choked in blood at its focus, but it spread everywhere and, the king being absent, committees were formed to organise the rising, men of all classes of opinions taking part therein, those who came from the past as well as those who went to the future. These committees multiplied the focuses of resistance and entered into contact with the agents of England that observed the events with a profound attention, having just terminated her maritime accoutrements to invade and rouse to rebellion the defenceless colonies and the very future hero of the war in Spain and the final struggle against Napoleon, the later Duke of Wellington, was going to direct all operations. The Spanish revolution brought a change into the orientation of English policy, and the British forces steered to Portugal.

The Spanish revolution, for such it was, indeed, since it gave birth, painfully, but indefectibly, to the destruction of the old regime, had a formidable repercussion in Mexico; it was easy to restrain the exteriorisation of the ideas, it was impossible to hinder them to continue their way in the shade; the Inquisition, divested of prestige and deprived of force, struggled to stop up the interstices in the locked doors in order to render the closure



Ferdinand, VII

hermetical. Impossible! between her own fingers the rays of the new light were filtering in; the refutations of the abominable political and religious errors as they said, which had produced the French revolution and of those which were its consequences, revealed the most brilliant part of those abominations summed up in these two divine sophisms: the individual is free; the people, i.e. social majority, is sovereign. Then there came the events, the intimacy of the Spanish government, and the cursed revolution (Aranda), the impious doctrines of some minister of the crown (Urquijo), the scandals erected into a system of government by Godoy and finally the popularity of Napoleon, who being a supreme adventurer exalted all the leaven of adventurism that existed in the blood of the Mexicans and produced in them an un-satiated craving to conquer a new world in unknown regions.

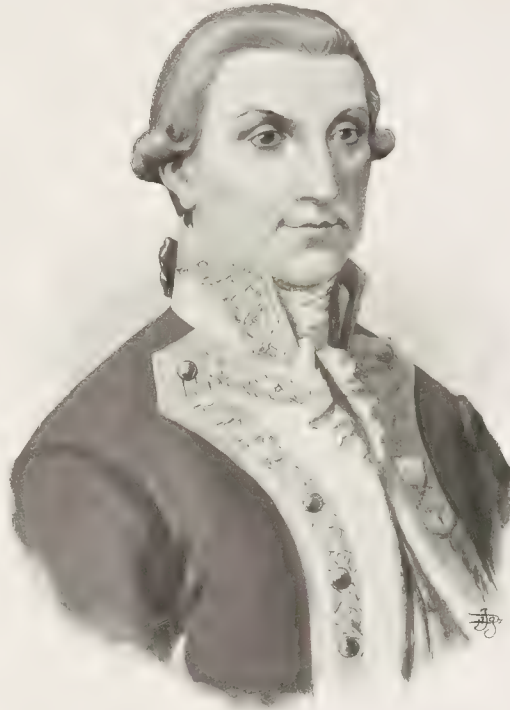
Iturrigaray armed the Mexicans, as his predecessors had done, urged by the needs of the war with the English, and thus a military class was definitively constituted that had not existed during more than two centuries and arrogantly claimed rights and privileges. Iturrigaray sought popularity among this class and in the cantonments at Jalapa he gave himself airs of a monarch; meanwhile he gathered riches by any means, opening his hands for every gift and helping every prevaricator. He was a Godoy; and as communications with the Peninsula were scarce and precarious and as he kept the Government at Madrid content by sending as much money as he possibly could whenever there was an opportunity, he was sure to be actually irresponsible and quietly observed from here the course of events trusting in the favour and good luck of his master.

In Mexico, however, opinion grouped in different centres in an ostensible manner. The struggle between Creoles and Spaniards became more and more exacerbated; more than ever, the former believed to have a right to be the Spanish king's agents in the government of the country; in the times of Charles III they had sent the king a most reasonable address to that purport, obtaining but little result; however, Europe being now involved in an immense crisis, they felt instinctively there was drawing near a conjuncture propitious to attain their purposes. The pure Spaniards who were not even a tenth part of the Creoles, shared with them the wealth, but almost monopolised the posts in the Audiencias and high offices; in some towns they governed the councils (as in Zacatecas and Veracruz); theirs was the superior clergy and the Consulate that served them as a centre of resistance and they were resolved to fight to their utmost rather than allowing the prey to be snatched from them. How were these incompatible elements to enter in action and come to blows?

The news arrived at Mexico of the revolt in Aranjuez, of Charles IV's abdication, of the enthronement of Ferdinand VII whom Iturrigaray, utterly uneasy, proclaimed in Mexico as king of Spain and the Indies. The shipwreck of Godoy carried him along into the abyss; he endeavoured to save himself and waited; he did not wait long: the events of Bayonne and the news of the insurrection of Madrid against French rule fell into Mexico like a thunderbolt: actually, Spanish government was not existing, the Colony, in loyalty to the dethroned king, unanimously repudiated the government of Joseph Napoleon and the viceroy together with the Audiencia, under the force of circumstances, assumed the power of authority. With whom were they to share it? With the Creoles? This would have been equivalent to independence. With the Spaniards? That would have been a declaration of war against the Mexicans. It became soon apparent: Iturrigaray inclined towards the Mexicans; the Audiencia leaned on the uncompromising Spaniards. The viceroy provoked meetings of the Audiencia, the town-council of Mexico, organ of the Creole party, and some notables; in September 1808 there arrived representatives of Spanish committees that styled themselves sovereign, and this, while augmenting confusion, encouraged the Spaniards, because it proved resistance became organised in the Peninsula. The Mexican party affirmed no committee ought to be acknowledged, a Congress must be convoked in Mexico and this and the viceroy ought to govern until Ferdinand recovered his liberty. In the solemn session held in the Palace it was clearly to be seen how much the new ideas had advanced, how much the Mexicans had read and how powerless Inquisition had been to hinder the transformation of a people's soul. The Spaniards' programme was to recognise the Sevilla Committee

and to hinder and choke in Mexico every attempt at liberty. «This word, the members of the Consulate said, sounds here of independence.» In order to attain the result, wished for by the consuls, the members of the Audiencia, the wealthy Spaniards, concerted a plan; their mercenaries, one night, invaded the Palace, seized the viceroy, deposed him, nominated in his stead an ancient Spanish military, captured the heads of the movement favouring provisional emancipation and the usurping Audiencia assumed government. The Mexicans let not this lesson pass unheeded: they learned that henceforth he who was the mightiest would govern; it was necessary to be mighty.

Coincident with the arrival of Iturrigaray in Mexico was that of the eminent polyhistor Alexander von Humboldt, who was carrying out a scientific exploration of America by permission of the Spanish government. His impression when he became acquainted with New Spain coming from South-America, was that of one who passes from semi-barbarity to civilisation; he described the physical aspect, generally marvellous, of the country he visited, principally its immense mineral richness, its metallic production superior to that of the whole world, and in spite of his wisely pointing out what from an economical stand point



Sir Joseph of Iturrigaray

diminished the value of these riches, the lack of population and means of communication, of rivers, above all, he contributed to accredit the tremendous error over which the Mexican people, since they felt free, extended their mendicant indolence, viz: Mexico is the richest country on earth. He described, with an admirable approximation to certainty (in relation with the scanty statistical resources of that epoch) the social state of Mexico, leaning on authentic authorities, on the testimonials of the privileged classes themselves, especially the clergy. He classified and distributed the population, approximately, in about three millions of indigenous, rather more than two millions of mestizoes and rather less than one million and a half of whites, about one hundred thousand of whom were natives of Spain. Rising from the native to the creole he showed how in spite of the endeavour of the ministers of

Charles III to emancipate the Indian from the tyranny of the Mayor and the Corregidor (who were substituted by the *subdelegate*), in spite of the suppression of allotments and the nearly total extinction of the commendams, the Indian, secluded, isolated, almost without any possibility to acquire landed property of his own and consequently to strengthen his personality, continued being a serf of the Church, of the Spaniard and of the Creole. He showed the *casta* or mestizo (there being comparatively few negroes in New Spain the mixing was nearly all between whites and Indians) confounded with the Indian on the farms, somewhat raised among the urban population where he began to receive some instruction, a nimble worker and sometimes of supreme honesty (merchants, for instance, confided all to porters, they never failed to meet their engagements), but often dominated by the vices held in suspension like pathogenic germs by the profound inactivity of society; he was distinguished by his aptitude to assimilate all that came from abroad, good or bad, and by his deep hatred against the white; and above, the Creole, landlord, often vicious and abhorrent of the pure Spaniard whom he considered as a usurper of all he possessed in New Spain: his office, his storehouse, his silk and linen shop, and his country house. Humboldt pointed out the recently made exertions to raise the intellectual growth of New Spain; while in the seminaries and former colleges of Jesuits now managed by the secular clergy, the production of priests and lawyers was pursued by means of the most trite and trivial of teachings, with a deplorably poor programme of scientific courses, causing the country the immense evil to be directed afterwards by persons of a purely literary education (lawyers), in return, scientific instruction given in the splendid palace called *Colegio de Minas* (Mining College) built by Tolsa and in other provincial Institutes, was remarkably ahead. The german scientist also spoke with high encomium of the artistic education and of the Academy of Fine Arts.

Relating to the political division of the country the illustrious traveller mentions the two groups of *internal provinces* on the North, where the white population dominated, although they were incessantly crossed by nomad tribes; their division into provinces of the West (Sonora, Durango or New Vizcaya, New Mexico and California) and of the East (Coahuila, Texas, Colony of New Santander, New Realm of Leon) constituting true military governments, partly mixed with the intendancy system, and the intendancies of Mexico (1,511,900 inhabitants), Puebla (813,300), Veracruz (156,000), Oaxaca (534,800), Yucatan (465,800), Valladolid (476,400), Guadalajara (630,500), Zacatecas (153,300), Guanajuato (517,300) and San Luis Potosí (230,000). All was peace, tranquillity and prosperity in appearance; all was boiling currents of new ideas and cravings and aspirations at the bottom of society.

Iturrigaray, after a short interreign, had been followed by archbishop Lizana, a good man chiefly occupied in assuaging the discontent of the Mexicans by sheer lenity and indulgence (there were frequent conspiracies) and in sending money to Spain more than ever engaged in the truceless struggle for Independence.

VOL. I.—PART SECOND

Political history

Michael Hidalgo y Costilla





Former view of house inhabited by Morelos in Cuautla

INDEPENDENCE

CHAPTER FIRST

BEGINNING. HIDALGO. MORELOS

ANTECEDENTS; THE PARSON OF DOLORES; GENERAL INSURRECTION; TRIUMPHS.
 CALLEJA; WAR TO DEATH; REPRESSION AND RECONQUEST. MORELOS; WAR IN THE SOUTH;
 LEGAL ORGANISATION OF THE INSURRECTION. VICEROYSHIP OF CALLEJA

ITURNIGARAY, at the outbreak, in Spain, of the struggle against the French intervention, had proclaimed, in some sort, the provisional independence of Mexico. «Concentred in ourselves, he said, we shall only obey the king and shall disobey the Committees not created by the king (in the situation of Ferdinand this was impossible) and in this sole case we shall obey them in the terms marked by the law.» The Spaniards, we stated, put him down and placed New Spain under dependency on the Central Committee. The Mexicans did not pardon this; they meant almost unanimously to depend on the king of Spain, not on the Spanish people, a new entity, legally alien to the Conquest and the Government of the Colony. They united, they conspired; they felt (I am speaking of the higher group distinguished by their breeding and their social position) themselves of age, from the convic-

tion that they were already a formed nation, they drew the conviction that they might emancipate themselves and from the situation of Spain they deduced that they ought to get emancipate.

They were conspiring in Morelia, in Querétaro; the conspiracy at Querétaro whose centre and soul was a young officer who had become acquainted with Iturrigaray at the cantonment at Jalapa, Ignatius Allende, was long in organising until the parson of the viticultural village of Dolores, in the Guanajuato intendancy, took an active part in it. Parson Michael Hidalgo was nearly sixty years old; he was son to a Spaniard radicated in a hamlet of the Pénjamo jurisdiction, he had received a rather careful literary and theological education and although the canonical incorrectness of some doctrines of his had brought him severe admonitions, after having been rector of one of the best seminaries of the country (St. Nicholas, at Valladolid, now Morelia), had won the good parish of Dolores, where without doubt he continued reading forbidden French and Spanish books and meditating about them. But he was not of a contemplative turn, he was a man of reflexion and action; he aimed at bettering the situation of his indigenous parishioners by means of work, creating and fostering industries (viticulture, sericulture, pottery), wherewith the authorities of New Spain did not feel much gratified. Attentive with deep and continent ardour to all that was passing in Spain and to the consequences these events had here, when he consented to take part in the group being organised by Allende, he began immediately to manufacture arms. The certainty that the Spaniards with all their heroism would not vanquish the Napoleonic invasion, the exasperation produced by the constant extraction of cash (eleven millions in 1809 and 1810) to support a lost cause, the poor decree of the Junta Central granting each of the American viceroysdoms the right to have themselves represented in that Junta by one deputy, caused an inexpressible tension of the minds. The first part of the struggle that ended at Bailen and with the withdrawal of the usurper king from Madrid, had been followed by the period of the French triumphs, personally inaugurated by Napoleon; there was no remedy; the sake of Ferdinand VII was hopeless; this the Mexicans knew when they invoked it to make their Independence. The Regency organised at Cadiz, last and, as it seemed, precarious bulwark of the Spanish nation, flung at the Americans who already began to revolt in the South, a proclamation wherein their right to take part in their own government was fully acknowledged, inviting them to get themselves represented in the Cortes. In this proclamation that might serve as a preamble and justification for any emancipatory movement, they said: «From this moment you see yourselves raised to the dignity of free men, American Spaniards; you are no more the same you were before; curbed down under a yoke so much the harder, the more distant you were from the centre of government, looked at with indifference, vexed by covetousness and crushed by ignorance.» New Spain nominated their deputies to the Cortes whereby all municipal authority was roused into motion making people conceive unwonted cravings for autonomy and freedom.

The Antiamericans, or *gachupins*, as from times immemorial they were nicknamed by the Creoles, the merchants, i.e. the Consulate, being the mercantile Senate of New Spain and having great influence on the ministers of the Regency by means of their partners the merchants of Cadiz, obtained that the archbishop was removed and the Audiencia, deeply divided but animated with an antiamerican spirit, was provisionally intrusted with govern-

ment. Inquisitor Alfaro had been the oracle of Abp. Lizana; judge Aguirre, a resolute and ambitious man, newly returned from exile to which he had been condemned by the archbishop, became, in spite of not being on very friendly terms with Catani, the president of the Audiencia, the leading soul of this Court giving it, of course, quite a reactionary turning, hostile to the new ideas; this implied a new enthronement of the party that had defeated Iturrigaray and whose programme could be summed up in this formula: *New Spain for the Spaniards*. The conspirers were preparing to enter into action.

The idea of insurrection sprang up among the troops cantoned at Perote and Jalapa under the command of Iturrigaray; there many gallant Mexican officers met and understood one another; the first shape assumed among them by the idea of patriotism which diffusedly had already mastered large groups of souls, was the one sketched in the propositions tendered by the syndics of the Municipality of Mexico to Iturrigaray, the sympathetic chieftain who at the military cantonments had acquired great popularity among the Creole officers. All their dreams of autonomy fell down with the viceroy's brutal dethronement and the state of mind of the Mexican officers will be understood by all who know the dry, deeply humiliating and exasperating form Spanish despotism is wont to assume, although in the main it is perhaps more generous than that



Ignatius Allende

of other nations. Some kept faithful to the Spanish cause, as young Iturbide; his fellow officers conspired at Valladolid (Morelia), but were discovered and mildly punished; the conspiracy abortive at Valladolid, revived at Querétaro where the affiliated formed a large group, from mayor Dominguez head of the judicial power of the town, an honest, learned and meek man down to the Gonzalez who possessed great ascendancy among the groups of people they belonged to. The conspiracy had ramifications in several towns, villages and manors of the Bajío (Low lands), in September 1810. The captain of dragoons of the regiment of the Queen, Ignatius Allende, who had been able to elude the persecutions directed against the conspirers of Valladolid whose active agent he had been, was the promotor of this revolutionary organisation. Patriotic feeling was condensed in this formula: *New Spain*

for the Mexicans or Americans as our grandfathers said; but to attain it meant to snatch it from the Spaniards, it meant a struggle, and a probably hopeless struggle. This idea, a quite exact one, entered fully into the minds of Allende and his helpers. Hidalgo to whom the soldier wished to intrust the first part in the action, in view of the immense prestige over the multitudes his sacerdotal character gave him, because in him the idea of independence wore a superior eminently social stamp being equivalent to the emancipation of the Indian declaring him of age and opening for him, with the industrial work not done by toleration but by right, the road of liberty (priest Hidalgo was the most zealous and remarkable industrialist in the country); Hidalgo, we say, devoted all his immense moral worth to the common work, presaging they would pay their attempt with their lives; he set the example. From the moment Hidalgo took part in the Querétaro conspiracy he dominated all by his will and consciousness; his behaviour as the head of the insurrection deserving some times a very just censure from humanity was dictated by the circumstances; his purpose was dictated by his love for a fatherland that existed not but in this love; it was he who engendered her, he is her father, he is our father.

Revolution was to break out in December 1810 during a large fair in one of the towns of the Bajío; grave signs of something having reached the ears of the Spanish authorities obliged the leaders to shorten the term fixing it for the beginning of October; but what had been a suspicion became a certitude: the conspiracy coming into contact with many people by its ramifications, had been denounced at Mexico, at Guanajuato, at Querétaro. The military conspirators grouped instinctively round Hidalgo; there they received the news sent by the heroic wife of mayor Dominguez, the first Mexican woman, that all was discovered and the conspirers were being imprisoned. Hidalgo did not vacillate: he gathered the men he could, gave them the arms he had, inspired them with enthusiasm by his speech and his example, in the atrium of the rectory, on the morning of September 16th and started for San Miguel (now Allende); on the way he took a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Mother of God of the indigens, declared it to be the labarum of his stupendous enterprise and the rural crowds abandoning their ploughs and their huts, followed him as their Messiah; at the shout: «long live Our Lady of Guadalupe and down with bad government!» (down with the gachupins, the crowds cried), the conspiracy of Querétaro had become an immense popular rising: it was the Insurrection.

Hidalgo endeavoured to keep up his ascendancy over those indisciplineable masses which, as it happens with all human multitudes, compressed during generations, suddenly, the pressure ceasing, expanded into savage effervescences; freedom, for those groups, was not a right, it was an inebriety; it was not a normal attitude, it was an explosion of hatred and joy, uncontrollable, unrestrainable, it had the aspect of a natural force in all its violence: water-spout, hurricane, inundation. Allende tried to create a military nucleus within that hord afterwards to be detached therefrom, an impossible enterprise. The priest's endeavour could be realised by dint of complacencies sometimes very sad and cruel, as the slaughtering of Spaniards at Guanajuato, Morelia, Guadalajara, abominations that make us grieve because we should like to behold stainless the figure of the supreme Mexican in history, but which had for a consequence the spreading of an impassable sea of blood between insurgents and dominators; thus all compromise became impossible.

The chieftains triumphantly crossed the Bajío, they seized Guanajuato where honest intendant Riaño improvised a brave defence in the massive building called «Alhóndiga de Granaditas,» at whose doors he died. Plenty of misdoings and crimes were perpetrated by those phrenetic hords that then took the road towards the capital through Valladolid; in this town they met with no other resistance than the excommunication edicts of bishop Abad y Queipo, an eminent man by his learning and his observant and righteous spirit and a personal friend of the leader of the insurrection; the edict irrefragably refuted by Hidalgo (it is not true, said the parson, that to be a good catholic it is necessary to be a good Spaniard) showed the stupor and the ire Hidalgo's surprising attempt had caused even in the minds of Spaniards of a high intellectual standard. The insurgents passed over the excommunications which the head of the chapter at Valladolid hurried to repeal and the great parson decreed the *abolition of slavery* and the *suppression of the tribute* paid by the Indians; the crowds which



Mexico. — Statue of the Monument to the Corregidora going to be inaugurated

Allende was unable to discipline, took the road of the valley of Mexico through Toluca; they vanquished almost at the very doors of the capital the scanty garrison and retroceded without attempting to possess themselves of Mexico, in spite of being invited to do so.

Hidalgo had not had time to organise any plan: his dispositions referred to momentaneous matters and the general ideas contained therein could be summed up thus: «to put an end to the Spanish element in New Spain in order that this country, mistress of herself,

might be preserved intact for her legitimate king Ferdinand VII (whom they of course hoped never to come out of his captivity).» What sort of government was to be established in the new American nation? Hidalgo had some thought about this: a Congress, municipal suffrage, was the base. Be this as it may: the movement had spread, everywhere groups rose in arms; plenty of men devoted to the new ideas bravely accepted the posts of danger in these partial risings, some military men, more lawyers, many priests; these were the most grieved against the upper clergy, they were more acquainted with the new theories, taught by their very refuters, they touched the social evil, the immobility of the indigenous mass and, feeling deeper the evil of Spanish domination, were struck with horror at the idea of there being no more the counterpoise of the monarch's ever moderate and humanitarian authority and therefore they were more patriotic.

While the edict of the bishop elect of Michoacan roused an echo in every episcopal see of the realm and the excommunication of Hidalgo and his followers, «the bold» as they were called by the Church, was reinforced, the new viceroy Venegas who just in those days had assumed government, organised the scanty garrison of Mexico, that was vanquished as we stated, not so much by Hidalgo's temerarious rabble as rather by the bravery of Allende's soldiers, and called to his aid brigadier Calleja who left San Luis Potosí, got reinforced by the troops of Count de la Cadena, at Querétaro, reached the insurgent army in full retreat in the first days of November, vanquished and nearly disarmed them; fortunately, in those same days the insurrection won remarkable triumphs in the interior mastering Guadalajara, Zacatecas and Tepic.

The chief leaders who viewed the struggle from two distinct standpoints (Hidalgo as a popular rising, Allende as a military problem) separated, not quite agreeing; the former went to Guadalajara after permitting horrible murders at Valladolid and the latter marched to Guanajuato. Hidalgo began to regulate the unusual and informal power circumstances had conferred on him, as soon as amid the delirious delight of the crowd he arrived at Guadalajara and repeated the redeeming Valladolid decrees about tributes and slaves. Calleja with dreadful activity had snatched from Allende Guanajuato, bloodied by turns by the ferocity of both insurgents and royalists, and advanced upon Guadalajara. After the hard battle at Puente de Calderon in which forty thousand insurgents, many of them armed with pikes, slings and arrows, were completely routed, Hidalgo together with Allende and the chief promoters of the insurrection fled towards Zacatecas and agreed Allende should assume the whole military direction of the movement. It seems the fugitives' intention was to enter through Texas the United States where they would be able to gather sufficient resources to get the insurrection armed. Between Saltillo and Monclova they were surprised by a treacherous officer (it is useless to stain these hurried pages with his name) and led to Monclova first and then the priests to Durango, with the exception of Hidalgo who with the others was brought to Chihuahua. From their capture up to their death these men passed a true calvary; the frantic exaltation of the crowds that were told the leaders were in connivance with Napoleon and the cool cruelty of their guardians made them martyrs; they did not lament. It seems that during the mock-trial set up at Chihuahua (nothing is known about it but the mere deeds of the process made to the liking of the judges) there

were reciprocal and painful recriminations: those men had lived in a state of febrile excitation only comparable with the gigantic temerity of their enterprise; it is no wonder, it is utterly human, that in the period of depression caused by the absolute certainty of a near death, there came a revival of the creeds and feelings of all their former life, producing acts of weakness and retractations; but none of them, none absolutely, aimed at saving their lives; on the contrary, they, above all Hidalgo, took on themselves the most tremendous responsibilities. The fatherland born from their heroic blood, reconciles them in her immense gratitude and absolves them in their glory. Some at Monclova, others at Durango, Hidalgo and his companions at Chihuahua were sacrificed in the middle of the year 1811.

At those same days Morelos and Lopez Rayon had roused the mountainous districts of the South of the vicerealm; they extended the range of their activity through the ridges that separate the central tableland from the Pacific Ocean and Rayon had constituted a Governing Committee at Zitácuaro. Thus the fathers of the Independence had been captured in full rout, however in full insurrection; the march of Rayon and the heroic Torres, the insurrectionist of Jalisco, from Saltillo to the heart of Michoacan through Zacatecas, from battle to battle, had demonstrated that Spanish power, in spite of all vic-



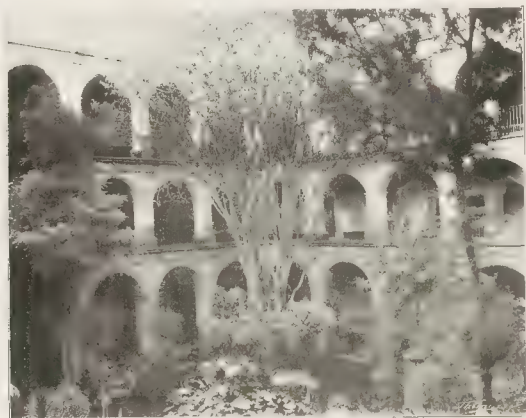
Ignatius Lopez Rayon

tories, was unsettled. The reconquest of the principal towns had been achieved, but not that of the country burning with guerrillas, nor that of society burning with conspiracies. And repression growing inexpressibly cruel, the infinite craving for emancipation combined with a fierce longing for vengeance; the duel was a mortal one.

Parson Joseph María Morelos and Pavon who had passed his entire youth crossing the sierras of the South as a mulcteer and who being already a man of great ascendancy among the mountaineers resolved to attain a position that might serve him as a shield against the utterly despotic of the Spanish or Creole masters, had studied at the college of St. Nicholas in Valladolid, guided by the counsels of Hidalgo who, since then, exercised on him the irresistible prestige of his penetrant intelligence and of his will to find by all means

the roads to social reform, and succeeded in obtaining holy orders and a parsonship at Michoacan. Thence he started to join the great parson on his passage through that province with the insurgent army and received the commission to rouse and raise the population of the South and to get hold of any port apt to make the insurrection communicate with the exterior. When the insurgent general Rayon, ex-secretary to Hidalgo, succeeded in establishing a nucleus of political organisation at Zitácuaro, Morelos had not yet been able to seize Acapulco, but he had improvised, seasoned and disciplined a rural army with which he kept in check the royalists over an immense zone; among his staff, to call them so, there excelled the noble figures of Galeana, Bravo, Guerrero and then the audacious and indefatigable parson Matamoros.

Viceregal government made exertions to hinder the new leader from leaving the southern



Mexico. — Court of the National Preparatory School
(former college of St. Alphonsus)

mountain districts hoping to be able to destroy him there afterwards; meanwhile the attempt to create a political and government centre had attracted against Rayon all the effort of repression, general Calleja being intrusted with this campaign; if Rayon had succeeded in prolonging the struggle, the royalists' triumph would have been nullified by the importances of the districts Morelos would have been able to dominate taking advantage of the concentration of the Spanish troops in Michoacan; but he had hardly commenced to carry out his

plans when he learnt the annihilation of the insurgents by Calleja at Zitácuaro and his triumphal return to Mexico. Morelos moved swiftly amid the royalist forces, obtaining frequently some advantages and, at length, adopted the plan to attract on himself the gross of Calleja's army, in order to give the insurrection free scope to become vigorous throughout the southern zone. The siege of Cuautla by the royalist army was the outcome of this plan, constituting the most serious and best organised military operation during the war against insurrection and Calleja who carried it out omitted no strategical means or tactical resource of any kind to oblige Morelos to surrender. When this after a series of heroic episodes deemed his situation unsustainable, he broke through the blockade, wonderfully frustrating the Spanish general's plans and, reappearing bolder and more formidable than ever at the south of Puebla in the districts of Veracruz, he contrived to discomfit all the royalist plans of campaign by the celerity of his marches and unexpectedness of his blows. After rescuing undaunted Trujano who long besieged at Huajuapam was on the point to succumb and surprising Orizaba, Morelos took Oaxaca, the news thereof reaching Mexico when nobody

expected such a thing. It was then he tried to achieve his programme of political organisation; it was necessary for the insurgent nation to unify before the submitting nation and to begin to speak to the world. This and the wish to get a port where to communicate with the world abroad and to solicit the aid of the other independant Americans of the United States in order to be able to supply with arms the insurgent troops almost destitute of guns, induced him to undertake the campaign crowned by the seizure of Acapulco for which the ingenious parson has been so very much censured.

With the rests of the Zitácuaro Committee, with the issue of some partial elections and with some nominations made by Morelos as invested with supreme faculties by the almost unanimous aspirations of the Mexican people, an assembly was organised at Chilpancingo that acted as spokesman for the country and was the vehicle of the leader's tenacious and perfectly just ideas. General Félix María Calleja ascended later on to lieutenant-general and finally rewarded with the title of Count of Calderón, had taken charge of viceroyship at the beginning of 1813, this being an indication that the war of extermination was to become better systemised. Morelos was resolved to use the most terrible reprisals and had already shown that he knew how to carry out his purpose to the most cruel extreme. Therefore he needed a legal investiture which only the representatives of the insurrection could give him; but this was not his chief aim in organising the Chilpancingo Congress: he wished to get it clearly stated, without any ambiguousness or reserve, that the meaning of the nation's rebellion against Spanish government was absolute independence. The news from Spain showed the perspicacious parson that the Peninsula almost free, in the middle of 1813, from the French occupation, was the antecedent of Ferdinand VII's return and then there would be no reason to continue the insurrection, this always having proclaimed obedience to the captive king. Not without great exertion Morelos succeeded in realising his desire and the declaration of independence, November 1813, was so clear and terminative that there remained no room for doubt; nothing could be changed therein by the enthronement of Ferdinand.

Morelos, invested with full executive power but hampered by the interference in all things claimed by the Assembly on which he never attempted to impose his own will, thus setting a supreme example of civism, undertook a new great campaign for which he gathe-



Nicholas Bravo

red all his resources and which ought to render him master of Michoacan. But he failed in his attack on Valladolid defended by Llano and Iturbide and these two energetic royalist chiefs who passing from defensive to offensive undertook a series of victorious attacks that ended in the bloody battle at Puruaran where the independent army almost got dissolved; Morelos succeeded no more in gathering the troops he needed to try the fortune of arms anew and on a large scale as he liked to do; his best lieutenants died or were reduced to impotency; Oaxaca and Acapulco were reoccupied by the royalists and the Mexican Congress and Executive Power wandered in the rough mountain ranges of the South risking to be captured; the period of eclipse and depression which during great revolutions always follows that of inception and expansion, began in the struggle for independence with the year 1814; it was to last six years.

The definitive liberation of the peninsular territory, the reenthronement of Ferdinand VII, the downfall of Napoleon and the derogation of that theoretical and generous Constitution of 1812, a formula of the high ideals of a group of men, nucleus of the Spanish people of the future, rather than a condensation of the aspirations and actual needs of Spain at the beginning of this century, followed in rapid succession; the noble Code of Cadiz disappeared there amid the stupid applause of the crowds and the hatred of the privileged; here where it had scarcely been enacted giving rise to the persecution of those who like Fernandez Lizardi (*the Mexican thinker*) wanted, by means of the press, to make use of the liberties granted therein, amid the cynical rejoicing of the authorities and the Spanish party, the indifference of the independent and the ignorant calmness of the people systematically atrophied in will and thought. The Mexican Congress, from the bottom of Michoacan, replied to the disappearance of the Spanish Constitution by issuing a Constitution, in part a transcript of that murdered by the king of all perjuries and all ignominies; the Mexican Constitution of Apatzingan, or to give it its historical title, the *Constitutional decree for the freedom of Mexican America* (October 1814) was not promulgated as a definitive one, but only as a provisional one «until the nation rid of the enemies that oppress her dictates her Constitution.» Like the Spanish Constitution it comprised an electoral law, one for the administration of justice and organisation of tribunals, all of them signs of inexperience, but of a profound conviction of the necessity of innovation, reforming the old regime; the Constitution of Apatzingan is distinguished from that of 1812 by its clearly republican character (even committing the stupendous mistake, in that epoch of struggle for life, to distribute executive power among an incessantly renewable triumvirate) and by a greater stress laid on the exclusive predominion of catholicism; Congress had already decreed the reestablishment of the Jesuits and in the constitutional law it was declared that heretics, apostates, foreigners not being catholics, could not be citizens; like mariners who on the point of shipwrecking invoke heaven with all the impetuosity of their indomitable souls, those first fathers of the Republic laid hold on their religious creeds as on a board of salvation; when they said «God and Fatherland» they manifested all the faith of their consciences and all the love of their hearts; we, children of this century which is dying sceptical, disillusioned and cool to the very marrow, let us try and respect and admire those who identified their faith and hope in one sole religion, even on the grades of the scaffold.

When after some months, in autumn of 1815, the Congress wished to settle in a place

where its acting might be better felt amidst the independent groups vanquished everywhere and resolved to transfer its seat from the Michoacan sierras to a place near Puebla, Oaxaca and Veracruz (Tehuacan), Morelos meant to escort and defend his fellow deputies. Attacked by the royalists the deputies contrived to escape in safety owing to the sacrifice of their heroic defender who was captured, conducted to Mexico, degraded by the Church and sacrificed by Calleja: this was fatal, it being necessary to punish the insurgency in its most energetic, most implacable, most untamed, most selfconscious, most elate incarnation.

With Morelos the year 1815 ended and the disaggregation of the insurgent nation began: the Congress was dissolved by an insurgent chief, the first coup d'état in the history of the Republic still in her gestation period, and although it could be reckoned about thirty thousand were still fighting for the cause of Independence disseminated between the isthmus and the central plateau, they were unable to dominate districts of importance more than ephemerally. In the fall of 1819 viceroy Calleja was summoned to Spain: he was the symbolisation and personification of an unrestrained repression policy; he, like many agents of Spanish dominion in America and Europe, thought that to terrify was to vanquish, and did not see that the unquenchable rancour passing from the souls of the dead to those of the subdued would assure for later on the success of any emancipatory movement; Calleja's policy converted the insurrection into an unrelenting war, and Independence, repressed and choked in blood, revived in the Mexican hearts; this was to be seen clearly in 1821. Calleja himself passed judgment on his policy in documents published afterwards: «Six millions of inhabitants decided on Independence, he said, are in no need of either agreeing or convening.»



Spain. — View of Pamplona, native town of Mina

CHAPTER II

MINA, GUERRERO AND ITURBIDE. TRANSITION PERIOD

THE NEW VICEROY AND THE NEW POLICY. A HEROIC EPISODE: MINA. PACIFICATION. GUERRERO
IN THE SOUTH. INDEPENDENCE

THE army left by Calleja to his successor consisted of forty thousand well organised men and of an equal number distributed in local corps; it could be said about eighty thousand men were occupied in the laborious task of repression which was advancing unceasingly. Treasury did not lack resources owing to new taxes and in spite of the dilapidations of Calleja and his favourites; but two circumstances, above all, were of a doleful momentousness for the insurgents devoured by dissensions and incapable to acknowledge a centre of government and action: first the instructions to observe a policy of pardon and amnesty as far as possible, given to the new viceroy Apodaca who by his bounteous character made a contrast with his antecessor Calleja, and second, the facility to send troops from the Peninsula where the army that had waged the war and had not been licensed, remained unoccupied. The weight of this last circumstance became attenuated for the Mexicans by the necessity Spain was in to disseminate her attention and her resources over all Spanish America, bur-

ning alike ourselves, in risings and combats from the isthmus of Panamá down to the South of Buenos Aires and Chile.

It is truly astonishing and admirable what the insurgents contrived to accomplish operating without any link of unity or concert and in spite of the superiority of the royalists by their discipline, arms and resources. They had constructed, in nearly inaccessible places, forts to serve as depots for all the arms and ammunitions they could gather; the most celebrated of these hills, some of them fortified with a marvellous military instinct, were Cópore in Michoacan, Sombrero and Remedios in the sierras dominating the Bajío, and Janjilla, amid the marshy lagoon of Zacapu (Michoacan) that served as a refuge to the last vestiges of the Congress of Apatzingan constituted into a governing Committee hardly able to extend their range of action as far as the Bajío. Teran and Victoria in the oriental sierras, between Puebla and Veracruz: Guerrero, Ascensio, Bravo, the Rayons in the orographic bulk uniting the two cordilleras, and Torres, Moreno and others on the boundaries of New Galicia and the Bajío; in the oriental plains of the central tableland Osorno, the Villagrans and others indefatigably were crossing the country. In the lake of Chapala a handful of heroes, masters of the principal islets, defied for years all the exertions of Spanish government.

The insurgents led a parasitical life on the country sucking out the farms and destroying almost all those belonging to Spaniards; besides exacting taxes and rescues from the villages often burnt down by ferocious chieftains like Osorno in the Ápam plains or the second father Torres in the Bajío, they procured resources gathering tolls on passing merchandise, assaulting convoys, etc. All had recourse to these means although they were necessarily precarious and impossible to concentrate, the patriots' organisation being such as it was. In order to become fully aware of the exhaustion of the country, five years after the outbreak of revolution, this exhaustion being the main ground for the pacification obtained by the new viceroy Apodaca, one must also take into account the behaviour of most of the royalist chiefs (there were very honourable exceptions). We do not mean to speak of their cruelties it being certain that both parties vied with one another in ferocious warfaring and Morelos had no ground to envy Calleja nor was Iturbide's inhumanity superior to Hidalgo's, unfortunately; this bestows so bright and so pure a shine on Bravo's act of clemency pardoning the Spanish prisoners and setting them free when he was informed his old father had been shot; it is a divine star in that moral hell. We refer to the abuses committed by the royalist chiefs eager to enrich themselves; brigadiers Cruz and Arredondo had constituted for their own profit, the former in New Galicia and the latter in the interior provinces of the East, true satrapies where the viceroy had no actual power and commerce was absolutely at the will of the governors. Arnijo in the South, Iturbide in the Bajío and a hundred others elsewhere were endeavouring to protract a war that brought them fat revenues and extracted in streams the blood and gold from exhausted New Spain.

Apodaca had the good luck to modify in some way this state of things, endeavouring by all means to bring the struggle to an end and combining force with pardon, regiments coming from Spain with forgiveness even to the most bloodthirsty insurgent chieftains. Before Mina's expedition, in 1817, the lagoon of Chapala, after five years of resistance and truceless fighting, was pacified by Cruz by means of an honourable capitulation of the group of natives that had possessed themselves of the isle of Mexcala; this was the first official

capitulation in that terrible struggle. The same thing happened with C6poro on whose slopes the royalists had so often been repelled; and Mier y Teran, the most enlightened of the military chiefs of the insurrection saw himself obliged to surrender near Tehuacan. A great many insurgent chieftains, like Osorno, solicited amnesty. Victoria, Bravo, Guerrero, Rayon, the Jaujilla Committee, the forts of Remedios and Sombrero, were still resisting; but it was a question of time: the insurrection seemed drawing near its end.



Guadalupe Victoria

he fled to England; there father Mier, a Dominican who for his ideas had been a victim of the persecutions of both Church and State, convinced him that by serving the cause of Independence in Mexico he would fight against Ferdinand and on behalf of his own ideals of freedom and that it was in liberty and not in war Spain and her free colonies might unite once more in the future. Mina who through his influence in masonic lodges was able to come into contact with men disposed to sacrifice their lives on the altar of their craving for human emancipation, passed, with a cosmopolitan handful of eager and enthusiastic adventurers, from England to the United States, to Haiti, to the port of Galveston where he definitively organised his expedition and landing on the Mexican coast at Soto la Marina began the heroic period of his temerarious enterprise in April 1817.

Then there appeared on the coasts of the Gulf a Spanish chief who came to renew the struggle. Mina was not yet thirty years old; having escaped from college when the national rising against Napoleon broke out in Spain, he raised Navarra and upper Aragon; being captured by the French, he completed his education at the side of an indefatigable conspirer against Napoleon, general Lahorie, in the dungeons at Vincennes. After the emperor's downfall he returned to Spain with his heart full of longings for freedom and his mind abounding with ideas of social and political regeneration; Ferdinand VII's attitude on the throne his cowardly abjectness ought to have made him lose for ever, struck him with amaze and indignation and he protested thereagainst with the arms in his hands. Being overcome

The new Mexican chief's march from Soto la Marina to the fort of Sombrero, fighting, vanquishing and spreading awe among Spanish authorities, was an epopee: his resistance against Liñan, the new officer come from Spain with the auxiliary troops, his attempts to save the fort of Sombrero seized at length by that chief who got an opportunity to practise on the prisoners acts of abominable cruelty, were astonishing for the energy and valour displayed. Only a few of his good fellow expeditioners were left to Mina who, convinced that in order to save the fort of Remedios also besieged by Liñan, he must attract the attention on himself by a sure blow on any of the towns of the Bajío, crossed that district organising on his march the groups that had joined him, penetrated into Michoacan, attempted to surprise Guanajuato and at last, overcome and fugitive, he fell into the hands of the royalists and was executed. At that epoch, dawn of new ideas and new fatherlands, such holy causes as that sustained in Spain and in Mexico by Mina, were a sort of common and higher fatherland. Mina was considered a traitor by the Spaniards; never he was one, never he thought he was making war against Spain while fighting against the abominable tyrant at Madrid; to-day, viewing things from far and serenely, we may say he was right and if he were not so regarding Spain, he was so regarding Mexico that adopted him as a son, that blended his memory with that of the heroic fathers of Independence, glorifying and blessing it.

The hill of Remedios did not give way in consequence of the death of Mina; it resisted long, the combats fought there are feats of first rank in which Mina's foreign officers induced their Mexican soldiers to do prodigies of valour. At last they succumbed; the new life Mina's presence had begun to inspire the revolution got extinguished once more; the chieftains died, some of them most bravely; others solicited amnesty, almost all of Mina's officers did so, others still, such as Rayon and Bravo, were captured, pardoned and kept in prison. In the year 1820 the country was nearly pacified. The supreme effort made by those one hundred thousand royalists who fought against parties without arms, without connexion and without discipline, brought about the expected results; those who were not in prison, accepted the amnesty and many figured among the royalist forces. All, with the exception of Guerrero and Ascensio in the South who declined the offered amnesty and continued fighting without truce; others, like Victoria, hid and awaited the day of unfailing triumph; all expected it. The independence movement was transformed in the minds into warmth of hope; psychological forces do transform into one another like physical forces. The country was an immense ruin; from the Isthmus to the North, flats and hills had been soaked in blood; whenever new outer conditions would be favourable, the phenomenon of 1810 would shoot forth again with irresistible force. So it happened.

The first insurrection had been able to break out owing to the peculiar circumstances going on in Spain between 1808 and 1810; the reorganisation of absolutism after the downfall of Napoleon had made possible a momentary repression of the movement; but this had become wholly master of the minds, to such an extent that among the active part of society, Spanish domination was sided only by the upper authorities, part of the high clergy, most, not all, of the European Spaniards, a minority of Creoles, a few among the mestizoes, as colonel Armijo and several educated Indians. In exchange a large fraction of the upper clergy, of the Audiencia, nearly all the lower clergy, nearly all the Mexican person-

nel employed in law or administration, the majority of the Creoles, the immense majority of the mestizoes who had supported all the load of the struggle for independence ever since 1811, and the indigenous masses roused by the parsons, formed the independence party and looked for the Spanish post to tell them the propitious moment to enter into action. The army, with the exception of a few chiefs and soldiers, was totally undermined by freemasonry imported into Spain by the French since the end of the century, with a tremendous spirit of proselytism; all Spanish masons were enemies of absolutism and craved for the installation



Xavier Mina

of constitutional government; the Mexican officers were nearly all of them independents, even those who had fought against the insurgents, and all who had accepted amnesty; many of them were free-masons besides. Such was, let us say so, the psychological situation of the country in 1820; about this the talk was at every meeting, at every circle, at every familiar gathering of Spaniards or Mexicans. The news from Spain showing clearly there was obtaining an effervescence precursory to revolution, alarmed the absolutists, not because they were radically opposed to any constitutional government, but because they feared the reinstallation of the Constitution of 1812 which they considered as a door opened for the destruction of catholicism in Spain; so some prominent

clergymen and functionaries met to discuss what would be more convenient to do in the case that Constitution was proclaimed; and being inly convinced the constitutional regime would have independence for an unavoidable consequence, they preferred promoting it themselves excluding the Spanish Constitution, thus doing something quite contradictory to what they had sustained when pulling down Iturrigaray.

When the news of the triumph of the constitutionalist revolution in Spain became known in Mexico, the parties got exalted and the anticonstitutionalist friends of Dr. Montegudo, perhaps the most influential person among the clergy, got ready for action. They chose their man; it was the royalist Mexican colonel Sir Augustin Iturbide.

Endowed with admirable valour, that indefinable attraction which magnetises soldiers

VOLUME FIRST

Political history

Augustine de Iturbide





and crowds and with a vague but extraordinary ambition which in those times took gigantic proportions in minds so predisposed, owing to the real legend of Napoleon, Iturbide had in his past a black history of bloody feats and abuses and extortions, the history of his ambition. Desirous of independence he combated it because in the movement begun by Hidalgo he did not find the elements of triumph to secure for him the first role and in order to arrive at an eminent post among the royalists he exaggerated his zeal, carrying it to white-heat exactly because it was not sincere and the sword of repression, in his hand, became stained with insurgent blood up to the hilt; when he thought his merit unacknowledged and his way shut up on the Spanish side, he directed all his endeavours to open himself a path elsewhere. The absolutists offered him an important military commission, the only one possible in those moments, that just abandoned by Armijo who had declared himself impotent to annihilate Guerrero in the South; the viceroy granted it him willingly, not out of fear a revolution might arise there, but because he felt sure an army at the command of Iturbide would serve him to subdue the constitutionalists whenever the king who was considered a prisoner of the liberals should order so or come over himself to exact the submission, a thing that seemed not very remote.

In those moments of chaotic confusion of ideas and of a deep indetermination regarding duty it was not possible to exact from a soldier following his banner the behaviour that would have been most suitable for his enemies. When, in January 1821, Guerrero, the indomitable and immaculate collaborator of Morelos, gave Iturbide the famous reconciliation embrace, he did not absolve him of the blood shed; he pardoned him, in the name of the country, in view of the supreme service he was going to render her; and the country has pardoned in the Iturbide of 1821 the Iturbide of 1813; she has confirmed the amnesty of the great heart of general Guerrero. As for the treason committed on viceroy Apodaca let the Spaniards condemn it, not we. We believe that in the mind of that ambitious man capa-



Morelia. — Monument to Morelos

ble to rise, tempted by the unsurmountable impulse to create a nation and to do at the same time Spain a great benefit, the nearly null personality of the viceroy was for nothing; nothing it was indeed. The final issue of the drama was rapid and almost unbloody; more blood was shed in any of the combats in the heroic period of the insurgence than during all the revolution inaugurated at Iguala. There (February 1821) Iturbide revealed his idea by means of a manifest and a plan his army swore after he had made sure of their officers and after coming to an agreement with the principal military chiefs of the interior, both Mexicans and Spaniards. When the plan of Iguala became known, a reactionary movement arose; a part of the army abandoned Iturbide, others grouped around the viceroy; but this was transitory and in the Gulf zone first, then in Michoacan and the Bajío, the revolution won rapidly an irresistible impulse; general Cruz who never meant seriously to resist, was obliged to surrender to his second Negrete the sultanate he had erected for himself in New Galicia and fled; Arredondo delivered that of the inner provinces of Orient and also fled; all the capital towns of the provinces fell into the hands of the army that called itself *triguarantor* because it sustained the Iguala plan based on three guarantees: *religion, union and independence*, materially symbolised in the tricoloured banner adopted by the country and divinised by the stream of heroic blood that had flowed over it.

In this situation Apodaca was pulled down at Mexico by the Spanish soldiery and a new ruler, nominated in Spain by the constitutionalists, John O'Donojú, made his appearance in New Spain. This man most perspicaciously understood what was going on and with a Spanish patriotism Spain was not able to value till after a century of tremendous lessons, acknowledged the fact irreparable and signed, with Iturbide, at Córdoba, the treaty which became the supreme law of the bran-new empire. Spain acknowledged and sanctioned the right of the Mexicans, already of age as their energy in the struggle had shown, to become emancipated and approved the bases upon which emancipation had been realised: creation of a Mexican empire, designation of Ferdinand VII or a prince of his house for the throne, immediate nomination of a governing Committee or a Counsel for legislation and administration to assist in the government of the country, an Executive or Regency composed of several members, election of Cortes or Constituent Congress which was to give the new country its fundamental law based on those three guarantees and reserving for them the right to designate the emperor if there were occasion for it.

On September 27th 1821 the triguarantor army amidst the febrile rejoicing of the people effectuated its triumphant entry into the capital of the Mexican empire; New Spain had passed over into history.

A chapter of threehundred years of Spanish history was closed on September 27th 1821, date of the beginning of the own history of a group born of the blood and soul of Spain within a physical and social medium *sui generis*; both of them influenced the evolution of that group, the former through the mere fact of obliging it to adapt to biological conditions greatly, if not absolutely, distinct from the peninsular environment and the latter, the social

one, the native family transforming it by a slow, but sure, ethnical blending whence the Mexican family came forth. Certainly the indigenous group at its turn, was transformed; being admirably adapted to the medium wherein it had become developed, it had acquired a social nucleus that was in full activity at the epoch of the Conquest; this at the same time as it forwarded them, with new means of subsistency, communication and moral and intellectual culture, the faculty of indefinitely widening that activity, submerged it at once into an absolute passiveness systematically maintained during three centuries and spreading by little and little over all the new society.

Spanish evolution whose last expression was embodied in the Hispano-American nationalities had not for a conscious aim (although this ought to be the object of all well attended colonisation, while Spanish domination in America was anything but this) the creation of national personalities that might at length become self-sufficient; on the contrary, by means of interior isolation (the Spaniard from the Indian abandoned to rural serfdom and religion that soon became mere superstition in his atrophied mind), concentric isolation abroad, between New Spain and the not Spanish world, tried to hinder the groups, that by an ineludible law were organising and increasing in conquered America, from becoming their own masters.

However, the energy of the Spanish race was such that the phenomenon came to pass and at the end of three centuries, owing to communication having become established like an osmotic phenomenon between inward groups and outward ideas, Spain found she had engendered some American Spains able to live by themselves and, by means of an unwise struggle, she tried to hinder them to do so. This violence that had so great an influence upon the future of the new nationalities might have been avoided had the high foreseeing patriotism of O'Donojú inspired the Spanish statesmen the day after the French revolution.



John O'Donojú

The new personalities that showed their wish to get emancipate and their force to attain their will, were not brought up to govern themselves; to rear them so was impossible for a nation wherein the absolutism of the Austrian kings and the administrative despotism of the Bourbons had choked every political germ; thus they met with the same deficiencies



Joseph Sixtus Berdusco

as Spain when they wanted to try free institutions and Mexico lost her time and her blood and was on the point to lose her autonomy in the mire of endless civil struggles that were but the new form of the adventurer spirit proper of the race from which she descended and whose psychological explanation consists in the creed that every individual and social difficulty is resolved by heaven's direct intervening in the shape of a miracle. Another hereditary belief dominates our history since then: as the Spanish people had inherited from the Jews the belief to be the new chosen people of God, so the Mexicans thought to be an elect people too, wearing the mark of Divine predilection in the riches of their soil: *they were the richest people on earth.*

Fortunately, the instinct grown sharper and sharper in the group that had begun to form the intellectual nucleus of the country, since the colonial times, soon understood the vainness of this dogma and

the funest consequences of those tendencies and the economical problem lying at the bottom of every social progress or retrogression emerged clear before their eyes and they were aware of the necessity to put it on the way for resolution starting from these axioms: Mexico, through the lack of means to work her natural riches is one of the poorest countries on earth; adventurousness is an energy that must be embanked by force to make it do useful work. The problem being stated in these terms, its resolution required the adoption of a policy absolutely contrary to that pursued by conquering Spain: all interior and exterior barriers were to be lifted. We are going to trace with broad strokes the doleful and manly history of this huge work.

VOL. I. — PART SECOND

Political history

Act of independence

REDUCED FROM ORIGINAL CONSERVED AT MEXICO IN THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES

Acta de independencia del Imperio Mexicano, pronunciada por su Santa soberana, con
regia en la Capital de él en 28 de Setiembre de 1821.

La Nación Mexicana que, por trescientos años, ni ha tenido voluntad propia, ni libre el uso de la voz, sale hoy de de la opresion en que ha vivido.

Los heróicos espíritus de sus hijos han sido connotados, y está consumada la empresa, eternamente memorable, que un genio superior á toda admiración y elogio, amor y gloria de su patria, principió en Aguila, prosiguió y llebó al cabo, arrojando obstáculos casi insuperables.

Restituida, pues, esta parte del Septentrión al ejercicio de sus propios derechos le concedió el tutor de la América y reconocen por inalienables y sagrados las naciones cultas de la tierra; en libertad de constituirse del modo que más convenia á su felicidad; y por representantes que pudiesen manifestar su voluntad á sus señores, como ya lo hicieron de tan preciosos dones, y declaró solemnemente por medio de la última suprema del Imperio, que el Dáccion Soberano, é independiente de la antigua España, con quien, en lo sucesivo, no mantenían otra Union que la de una amistad estrecha, en los terminos que prescribieron los tratados, que enablará relaciones amistosas con las demas potencias, executando, respecto de ellas, cuantos actos pueden y están en poder de ejecutar. Las dos Naciones Soberanas: que ya constituían, con arreglo á las bases que en el Plan de Basilea, intentó de Córdoba ratificar, sabidamente, el primer Oficio del Decreto Imperial de las Tres Garantias, y en lo que atañida á todo trancie, y con el interese de los haberes, mas de sus individuos, y here herederos, énta, Clemente deca, año, baba en la Capital del Imperio á Nueve y ocho de Setiembre del año de mil ochocientos veinte y uno, primero de la independencia é liberacion.



Mexico. Main court of the National Palace

BOOK THIRD

THE REPUBLIC

I

ANARCHY

(1825-1848)

CHAPTER FIRST

THE EMPIRE

(1821-1823)

THE NEW GOVERNMENT; THE PROVIDENTIAL MAN; FINANCE DIFFICULTIES;
RUDIMENTAL PARTIES. ITURBIDE EMPEROR. CONGRESS; REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION; ITURBIDE'S
ABDICATION AND END

PEOPLE wont to expect all from, or to see in all the effect of, a direct intervention of Providence (and where is there a people not so bent?), look on genial or lucky triumphers as true Messiahs; such was the belief the *Governing Committee* installed according to the plan of Iguala and treaties of Córdoba (O'Donojú and other conspicuous Spaniards figured therein) ingeniously expressed in the following paragraph of the *Act of Independence of*

the Empire: «The Mexican nation, not having had a will of her own nor the free use of her voice during three hundred years, to-day gets rid of the oppression wherein she lived. Her sons' heroic exertions have been crowned by the achievement of the eternally memorable enterprise which *a genius above all admiration and praise, love and glory of his country*, began at Iguala, pursued and carried through overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles.»

Nay, the Mexican nation had not passed three hundred years of life, but of laborious and deficient gestation; in the eleven years of struggle she had been brought forth as nations are born when they become self-conscious; nay, Iturbide was not a superior genius, he was a lucky man who did his country an incomparable, a supreme service and then entered into the shade of mistake and mischance which the ephemeral splendour of a crown was not sufficient to dissipate, but which was illumined in its tomb by the piety and gratitude of the Fatherland. What *the Committee* said, the whole people was thinking; only the group of Spanish or Mexican constitutionalists kept a rather ironical silence preparing to break the clay idol's feet.

The form of government being *Empire* and the throne being actually vacant until the conditionally nominated emperor, king Ferdinand VII of Spain, would dictate his resolution, a regency was nominated presided over by Iturbide and of which O'Donojú formed part for a moment; dying after a few days he was replaced by the bishop of Puebla, Perce, an arrant reactionist in Spain, enthusiast for independence here, out of hatred against the liberals and a man of pronounced moral inferiority everywhere. Thus Government became organised, not the situation; the necessity to pay their wages to the triguanator army, to the capitulated Spanish regiments, to sustain the duplicate charges of administration when the country was absolutely exhausted and continued being sucked out in detail by the prevailing chieftains in the provinces; when with the most generous and absolute improvidence direct taxes on the natives and others had been suppressed and Veracruz, the main port for any possible importation, was dominated by the cannons of the Spanish commander Dávila who had his custom house at Ulua, rendered actually impossible the administrative life of the empire. The sale of the confiscated estates of the Jesuits that would not have been a bad resource to gain a respite and meanwhile establish a normal state of things, was impracticable because the opinion favourable to the reestablishment of the Company was almost unanimous in the country and a shower of petitions to this purport were coming in. What was to be done?

Elections for the constituent assembly as required by the plan of Iguala, that would remedy all. The Congress met; the Regency paid them homage, the ministers treated them as a Divinity, calling them Y. M. and the Assembly declared Sovereignty resided in them and delegated it partially on an executive (the Regency) and on a judicial power according to the rites of the new political schools. All seemed to indicate, in those days of hopefulness, that the evils were transient ones, their end drawing near. The economical situation was rather black, but the political one seemed to clear up: the Spanish functionaries, magistrates, officers who considered themselves incapable to pact with the new empire obedience and adhesion, abandoned their posts and the country, as many rich Spaniards had done and others prepared to do; those who had adopted the new banner, some by want of

resources and others by personal interest, seemed incapable of disloyalty to their new fatherland and most of them proved to be so. The empire was rounding off; the peninsula of Yucatan that, not dependent on the viceroy, had her own history, very agitated and dramatic to be sure, that had maintained herself apart from the national emancipation movement but in exchange had been a focus of intellectual emancipation, spontaneously adhered to the new empire although her economical interests were quite opposed, the Spanish authorities themselves facilitating the transition. Chiapas, where the influence of the clergy was absolute, had become very soon a most active centre of an anticonstitutional propaganda and therefore the plan of Iguala, interpreted by many in an exclusively counter-revolutionary sense, found many partisans there, as also in some towns of Guatemala; hence an irresistible movement for independence and union with the Mexican empire; in the Centro-American provinces this feeling was very strong in some parts, but only feeble in others as in Guatemala and Salvador where a considerable group of patriots joined and obtained an absolute declaration of independence (September 15th 1822). But Mexican troops came to occupy the country, the adhesions to Mexico were multiplying, convocations were promulgated for the election of deputies to the Congress of the Empire, these elections took place and Centro-America formed a part of the new great Hispano-American entity of the *Septentrion*, as they used to say then.



Joseph Maria Fagoaga

In the Congress there became apparent a certain anarchy proper of the age of the new nation and of the parliamentary institutions in a country that not long ago never dreamt of getting them; all was surprise, curiosity, interest, doubt and inexperience; those who had formed part of the Spanish Cortes, those who had travelled abroad, those who had read political books, were the teachers and guides of the new Assembly. Very soon the outlines of some groups of quite different tendencies were to be noted: those who never pardoned Iturbide for the Independence (to this group the president of Congress, Odoardo, himself belonged), those who did not pardon him to have frustrated at Iguala a trial of acclimatisation of the Spanish constitution (Fagoaga was the head of this fraction); these groups that called themselves Spaniards or Bourbonists because they expected a prince of the royal family of Spain to accept the throne, were joined by the republicans, i.e. those who considered the plan of Iguala a shameful compromise with Spain (as though anything else could have been done)

and hoped the treaties of Córdoba having been rejected in Spain, governments like those existing in other American countries would be established here; these hated Iturbide for his former hostility against the *insurgents*, the strugglers of the heroic epoch; one of the regents seconded these views; the group of deputies addicted to Iturbide was in a minority; the army and the crowds, however, idolised him.

It was clearly to be seen, Iturbide strengthened by his popularity, by the army and the consciousness of the immense service he had rendered his Country whose founder he



Joseph Hippolytus Odoardo

believed to be, suffered impatiently the close hostility of Congress as he had supported the governing Committee's. The press, the masonic lodges that had increased greatly, the *old patriots* who had conserved their grades becoming auxiliaries or nationals, armed to combat the liberator. This, utterly exasperated by what he considered downright injustice and ingratitude, availed himself of a formal attempt of the Spanish governor of Ulua who relying on the colonial forces that had not yet left the country and on the repentants wanted to set up a counter-revolution, and officially, although with extraordinary precipitation and incoherence, directed a series of accusations against his enemies among the deputies and regents. The result of all this was a trifling fight between Mexican and Spanish forces which was

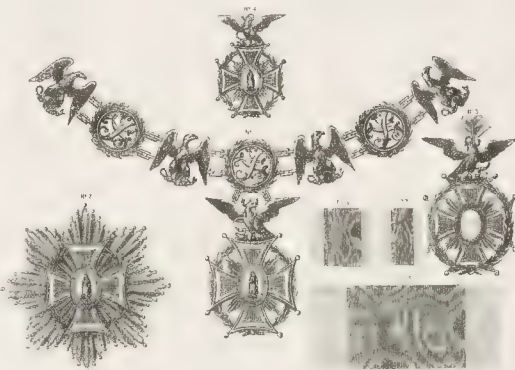
blown up to extraordinary proportions (general Bustamante was designated by the name of *hero of Juchi* where the encounter took place; we have had thousands of *heros* like this one in Mexico) and some deplorable scenes and personal conflicts between the generalissimo and his adversaries *in the very bosom of Congress* as they then said already, Congress and Regency came out morally lowered; however, the adversaries of Iturbide succeeded in putting him into minority even among the Regency and shocks became frequent.

Then there arrived at Mexico the news of the indignant and unreasonable repulse the treaties of Córdoba had received from the Spanish Cortes; the Bourbonists were confused and joined the republicans and former insurgents who, directed and organised by the masonic lodges, began to get petitions addressed to the Congress on behalf of a republic like those of Columbia, Perú and Buenos Aires. But this was not public feeling; the exaltation against Spain, an immense feeling of joy because the repulse of the Cortes had left the

Empire its own master and giving it a national character by breaking the last possible link with the mother-country; a vehement desire to defy the power of Ferdinand VII by placing in front of him a monarch born by the very Independence movement, such were the characters of dominant and overwhelming opinion. Iturbide more than ever appeared before the crowds as a guide and as a pharos: he was the national pride become flesh. This explains the *imperialism* of men like Gomez Farias and Zavala, the future heads of the radical party, striving to eradicate from the country even the last track of Spanish preponderance.

Congress were imprudent; pushed by the generalissimo's enemies governed by the masons at whose lodges they went so far as to discuss the suppression of Iturbide, even by means of a murder, they proposed to regulate the Regency forbidding the members of the same to hold military commands; the blow directly aimed at the generalissimo; Iturbide answered by a pronunciamiento of the capital's garrison that proclaimed him emperor. Congress meeting under circumstances when all deliberation was impossible owing to the delirious exaltation of the crowds, the soldiers and the monks, sanctioned the movement in an illegal manner legalising it however afterwards. And thus the Empire born at Iguala had for a head, since that moment

(May 21st, 1822) the «Constitutional emperor of the Mexican Empire, Sir Augustin Iturbide, first of this name» as the decree has it.



Insignia of the order of Guadalupe

It is useless to discuss about the conduct Iturbide ought to have observed in order to prop a throne erected on sand; after the events and in view of the funest consequences of his attempt, it is most easy to perform the part of retrospective prophets and so we now may allow us the satisfaction of an implacable censure demonstrating it would have been more convenient for him and for his country to break his compromises of Iguala and to inaugurate an eminently enlightened and organisatory dictatorship, a natural form of transition governments, until there were no more threats from Spain to be feared and the Republic, compact and strong, had become quite disengaged from the colonial matrix. In that situation Empire, by a semi-divine prestige, seemed a rule superior to a dictatorship; the ambition of him who, not without an appearance of reason believed his country owed all to himself, was satisfied by this supreme premium to his supreme merit, and the people unable to understand the advantages of a republic, responded with so lively a display of adhesion, throughout the whole extent of the new nation, to the exaltation on the throne

of the victorious chief that a man superior to Iturbide by intelligence and character might have become quite infatuated: for the indigenous and rudimentally bred classes of a society that had grown up in the religion of monarchy, a Mexican king was the living symbol of independence.

But if the world is to be governed by ideas having acquired the shape of feelings, it is under the condition that they identify with the interests, these being inferior but overwhelming feelings: the Empire, in spite of all its popularity, proved still-born coming forth indigent and frustrating instantaneously the hopes of all who looked thereon as a philosopher's stone, as a recipe to convert into gold for office-bearers, and every Mexican man aspired to hold an office, *the inexhaustible natural treasures of the richest country on earth*, this being an axiom so self-evident that all who dared criticise it were rated bad patriots. The coronation ceremonies offering, of course, a display of ridiculous luxury, a true apotheosis of upstarts, an impardonable sin in the eyes of the well-bred part of Mexican society given to satire and tolerant for all but conceitedness; the organisation of the emperor's house whereto several noblemen of the colonial aristocracy were ascribed; the composition of the ministry, of the Counsel of State, of the direction of the army, in all of which Iturbide was prodigal and generous, pleasing even his enemies; the pompous inauguration of the Imperial order of Guadalupe, the drawing-rooms, the religious performances, the festivals and popular prayers enlivened and enchanted society in the first days of the national dynasty.

But the financial situation was devouring the entrails of that regime which, in spite of Iturbide's disinterestedness, proved extremely dear and which was frustrate, just because it was insolvent; a Napoleon (this name and this example being a fatal obsession of Iturbide) laying hold of other people's money, was not to be conceived. Certain or guessed, as possible, news about conspiracies of bourbonists and insurgents or republicans spread frequently; disquiet and uneasiness, the fear of grave events reached the provinces starting from the capital; Iturbide, violating the constitutional privilege of the deputies, had several of the most conspicuous seized for the only reason that they were his enemies, for no proof whatever there was of the political crime attributed to them and so a great project of usurpation began to be formed.

The latent war between Emperor and Congress, damped and put off by the immense explosion of enthusiasm during the coronation days, broke out at last with more acerbitude than ever. Congress had been living on politics; little practical work had been done in administrative matters; the fisc had been allowed to live on expedients, by the day; there was a terrible *deficit* ever increasing by the Empire and the necessity to maintain on a war-footing an enormous army considering the resources (35,000 men), because the Emperor was unwilling, or perhaps unable, to miss it. Iturbide promoted an electoral reform quite sensible in itself, although impolitic at that moment, tending to reduce by half or thereabout the number of deputies. This measure was advised by Sir Lawrence Zavala, a Yucatecan politician who when a youth had distinguished himself in the group of emancipate intellectualists formed by the eminent Professor Moreno who afterwards suffered terrible penalties for the exaltation of his political ideas and who, after figuring among the representatives of New Spain in the Cortes at Madrid, had returned to his country with very

radical, but also very clear ideas, with strong and positive notions about the art of governing, to whose service he put an extraordinary and well cultivated intelligence and a character easily roused to a most terrible vehemence. Zavala was a most ambitious and a most audacious man; all his political ideal consisted in acclimatising in Mexico the parliamentary institutions of the Saxon type of which he was a devoted enthusiast; but in order to prepare the way he deemed necessary to put an end to the influence of the Spanish element in the new nation, to destroy the privileges of the till then directing classes; this was the programme of the liberal party in Mexico and therefore Zavala is one of its preeminent founders. Iturbide was for him an admirable instrument to accomplish his essential purpose: national and social independence regarding Spain. Zavala's project patronised by the Emperor, was disregarded by Congress; an initiative to create special tribunals to judge the crimes of conspiracy, homicide and robbery, was rebutted with just reason by Congress. Then Iturbide had several deputies imprisoned, expelled the remainder by force from the seat of the sessions and declaring the constituent Congress dissolved, nominated an *Instituent Committee* to attend to most necessary matters and to convoke, upon new electoral basis, a new constituent Congress.

The Committee, at the very moment it was born, met the financial problem; a sensible solution, even if it were but a provisional one, was a business of life and death. But how to assure life for the following day? The situation was precarious to such a degree that a forced loan, a form of exaction very much like an official plunder, was decreed and the emperor authorised to seize a *conducta* (conveyance) of more than a million pesos going towards Veracruz, this being very like an act of brigandage. Zavala traced a finance plan wherein, to cover a deficit of several millions, a capitation was decreed, the coinage of a large quantity of copper was ordered and a paper money was created which in spite of government's honest endeavours to amortise it swiftly was received with discredit and distrust becoming thus terribly depreciated.

At Veracruz brigadier Santa Anna had attempted a blow on Ulua which proved a failure and placed him in an ambiguous situation inspiring the Emperor with great mistrust. This, in order to assure the success of his plan to deprive Santa Anna of his command and to consolidate the situation at Veracruz, went down to Jalapa, where he thought he had reduced the troublesome brigadier to impotency. It proved not so; he roused the garrison of Veracruz to rebellion under the pleased eyes of the Spanish governor of Ulua and proclai-



Lawrence Zavala

med something he scarcely could imagine what it really was. One of the politicians persecuted by Iturbide, a Mexican intrusted with the representation of Columbia in Mexico, Santa Maria, redacted for him a manifest and a plan on behalf of a republic.

Iturbide was aware of the gravity of the situation and sent against Veracruz his best soldiers and the general on whom he most relied, Echávarri. This understood it was impossible to seize Veracruz by force, his army was going to dissolve by the sole action of climate and thought he rendered a great service to Iturbide whom he deemed lost, by agreeing a pact called *Plan of Casa Mata* (February 1823) with the rebel of Veracruz who disavowed

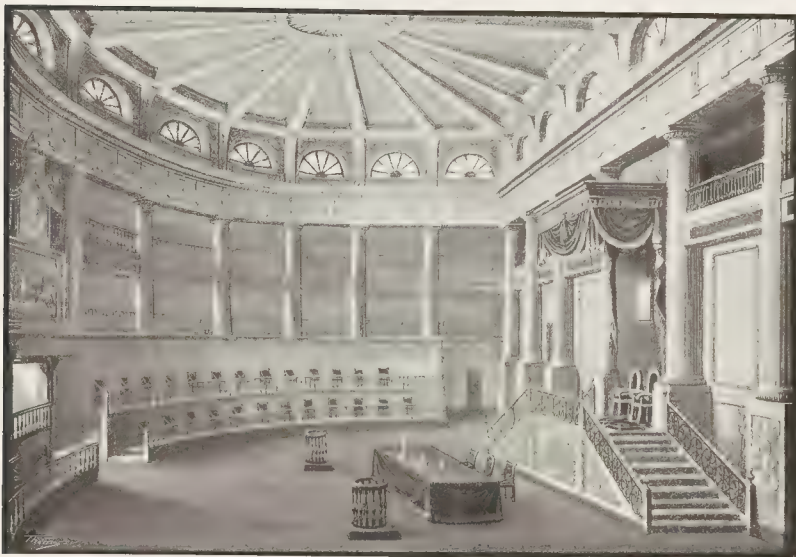


Peter Celestine Negrete

Iturbide and proclaimed the restoration of the dissolved Congress; the new plan acknowledged, in appearance, the Emperor's authority and required the speedy meeting of *new Cortes* under the safeguard of the *liberator army* which had begun to undergo a series of transformations passing from royalist to trigarantor and had now become *liberator*.

In order to make also the insurgents take part in the burial, and there is hardly a metaphor in so saying, Guerrero and Bravo had gone to raise the South and although vanquished by Armijo, this joined them at last considering the movement of the army accepting the new Plan throughout the country and seeing the very commissioner of Iturbide, the second military personage of the Empire, the Spanish general Negrete, had accepted the command of the military revolt. Iturbide assembled the

dissolved Congress and soon after, not feeling spirited to sustain a civil struggle sent the Assembly his abdication. The Congress did not admit it, but with a rancorous exaggeration declared the Empire had been an illegal and null regime, which was not true. Iturbide went into exile thus closing his public life (March 1823). When, a year later, an Iturbidist reaction appeared in the country giving the proscribed emperor some hope of recovering a role of first importance because he thought there was an imminent danger of a new Spanish invasion in Mexico, while the Congress at the same time declared him an outlaw and condemned him to death if he returned to his country, Iturbide left his exile and ignoring the terrible decree landed in Tamaulipas. Legislature carrying out the politic sentence with implacable rapidity, had him executed at Padilla (July 19th, 1824). It was a politic act, it was not a just act. Iturbide had done his country a supreme service which it is useless to try to reduce to an act of treason against Spain. He was not equal to his mission, but he never deserved the scaffold as a reward; had the country spoken, he would have been absolved.



Former Chamber of Deputies

CHAPTER II

FEDERATION AND MILITARISM

(1823-1835)

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1824: PRESIDENCE OF VICTORIA. REVOLUTIONARY FEDERALISM:
GUERRERO. MILITARISM: BUSTAMANTE. REFORMIST PROGRAMME: GOMEZ FARIAS. REACTION:
SANTA ANNA. END OF THE FEDERAL REGIME

THE revolution begun at Veracruz disowned the legality of Empire; the Casa Mata pact submitted the emperor to the decision of the restored constituent Congress and this, indeed, restored by the emperor under revolutionary pressure, declared, when refusing to admit Iturbide's abdication, Empire had been illegitimate in its origin; and in order not to leave any hope for a monarchic restoration declared the Iguala plan invalid in all referring to the princes of the house of Bourbon, and hence two parties became legally nullified: the Mexican imperialist and the Spanish-Mexican or Bourbonist, and a fact incontrovertibly established: Republic. What republic? The high-bred part of the triumphant oligarchy, the upper clergy, the principal chiefs of the army, the wealthiest land-owners were partisans of a republic after the French fashion, the capital predominating and subordinating the provinces, this being a natural outcome of the viceregal and imperial systems and therefore perhaps a more sensible, a more politic course. Congress inclined to this manner

of looking at things; the bourbonist party when disappearing, melted into this group which began to be called *centralist*, being headed by important politicians, such as Alaman, father Mier, Santa Maria, without a precise programme beyond a more or less frank hostility against the *federalist* party; at the side of this group all the conservative elements of the country stood and among them that which mastered nearly the whole commerce and a good deal of mining and agriculture, the Spanish element. Hence a curious political phenomenon arose: the *reformist* party which began to emerge clearly outlined by its incompatibility with the Spaniards and the privileged groups preponderant in the Centre whom they considered the main obstacle to the realisation of their view, the *Jacobins* (so father Mier styled them), in stead of being centralists as in France, were federalists and planned a republic calked from the North-American model whose constitution they had slightly studied: Ramos Arizpe, Zavala, Gomez Farias, Sanchez and others endeavoured to organise this party relying on a powerful auxiliary, Iturbidism, which throughout the country roused the localist spirit.

This had found beforehand an expression and a shape in the *Provincial Committees*, actual local Congresses emanating from apparent elections by the people, created by the Spanish Constitution and which rapidly acclimatised under the Empire became the centres of all the appetites, cravings and hankerings of the provincial groups for enjoying office and share the small local treasuries; thus in the most important towns of the country political oligarchies formed, quite resolved not to allow the conquered power to be snatched from their hands and to compromise only with the federal system which showed a marked separatist colour. The former province of New Galicia which already called herself *Sovereign State of Jalisco* and in the last colonial times had formed a sort of viceroyship by herself under the dictatorship of Cruz; the former inner provinces of Orient which tended to form a powerful new State on the North pushed by a very intelligent and very liberal clergyman, Ramos Arizpe, late deputy to the Spanish Cortes; Yucatan which by her geographical position and administrative history, by her economical interests and by her ethnical and linguistic autonomy was a small nationality apart and hardly ever had felt content to live united to the Mexican republic and whose intimate melting with the common fatherland has come about but slowly in the second half of the century, were the entities that had put themselves at the head of the movement and all the other former provinces followed the lead. In Guatemala, as it was natural considering the quite excentric position of this country, and the record of her autonomic history it being impossible to govern by the same financial system the regions of our tableland and the quite isthmian Centro-American districts, the federalist tendency took a markedly separatist and national character. The moment came when the Mexican Congress with a most honest wisdom, felt obliged to respect that feeling, consulted legally the will of the inhabitants who voted for their independence (with the exception of Chiapas where people eagerly and firmly manifested their wish to continue incorporated in the Mexican republic), retired the Mexican garrisons and solemnly acknowledged the new nationality.

The Congress having created the Empire comprehended it was impossible to go on and so, after taking some urgent measures of financial and military purport, reduced their role to the task of convoking a new constituent Congress giving way to a very strong pressure

and then withdrew. That assembly of intelligent and inexperienced men had done and undone their own work, had erected the Empire and had pulled it down; powerful to destroy, but impotent to build up; it was the first attempt at national parliamentarism. It was luckless; there have been others worse afterwards.

In the new Congress the federalist elements prevailed to such an extent that they considered themselves invested with the imperative mandate: to legitimate federation which actually already existed in an anarchic form. An executive power, composed of three members, officiated since Iturbide's fall: Negrete, a Spaniard of great military prestige, but deeply hated by the insurgents; general Bravo of highest integrity who inclined towards the moderate federalists and Michelena, an intriguing and ambitious man who owed his post to the circumstance that he had been the author of an Independence plan prior to that of Querétaro, bringing him in viceregal persecution. This executive power was incessantly composing and decomposing through the commissions the members were intrusted with; but the substitutes were always chosen among the former insurgents and in this way Guerrero, the ex-corregidor Dominguez and Victoria were transient members thereof. The minister of Relations (foreign affairs), Alaman, then an ally of Michelena,



Lucas Alaman

was the soul of the government; Alaman who, sometimes with utter partiality, sometimes with a superior political instinct and always in a noble style, was to be afterwards the historian, necessarily open to discussion but justly respected, of those dim epochs, had performed an important part among the American group of the Madrid Cortes; there he was the spokesman of the partisans of Independence and afterwards, in his own country, he was apt to wish for the re-establishment of the colonial power, but convinced of the impossibility of such an attempt he determined to put his vast knowledge and remarkable intelligence at the service of a purpose that might be formulated thus: «For Mexico it is convenient to return to the Spanish system although not to dependency on Spain, and not to separate therefrom unless when strictly necessary and then slowly.» This sophism of obser-

vation was the offspring of a comparison between the anguishes and sinister darkness of the present with the peacefulness, quiet and resignation of the times prior to Independence. With less prejudices and more historical perspective men thinking in the line of Alaman would have been aware that in the very calm and mechanic immobility of the colonial times there lay the germ of the raging storms that came later on. When first in office Alaman was a most moderate federalist and therein he was quite right; posterior events made him the organiser of the *conservative party* still incoherent then.

The Congress were quite aware of the anarchic state of the country and tried to hasten the promulgation of the bases of federation, even before the definitive Constitution, with the aim to appease the ardour and vehemence of the triumphant party's reclamations. This remedy proved to be only a palliative; the evil was a deep one: a symptom thereof was the military riot with participation of the garrison of Mexico headed by colonel Lobato who afterwards denounced, as having instigated him, Mirhelena himself who was intriguing in the executive power to disencumber from impediments the road of ambition and brigadier Santa Anna prosecuted for an attempt of federalist revolution. The principal aim of the rebels was to dispose of public power and money; the plan summed up in this: *separation of the Spaniards from public offices*, this measure being a violent one, prejudicial to good administrative service and contrary to the tripartite pact of Iguala, but without doubt it was a politic and under the circumstances a rational and necessary measure. It was reclaimed without truce by the former insurgent group that either incorporated into the army and in union with the Iturbidist officials diffused therein their hatred against the Spaniards who as a rule had been very cruel to their enemies during the war for independence enjoying good positions afterwards, or formed the nuclei of anticentralist opinion in the provinces and maintained a constant agitation utterly hostile to the Spanish element. The foolishness of the commander at Ulua, who bombarded Veracruz when he learned the French army had entered Madrid in order to put down the Constitution, and the sinister news coming from Europe and announcing a Spanish invasion aided by the triumphant Holy Alliance, certainly justified the reclamation but not the rebellion that succumbed by itself owing to the admirable civism of Congress. It is useless to state the majority of the deputies were of the same opinion as the authors of the riot.

Iturbide's former partisans making show of an uncompromising and almost separatist federalism, exploiting, we cannot but repeat, the antispainish bias of the crowds that at every tumult repeated as a social war-cry: *¡Mueran los gachupines!* (down with the Spaniards!) expressing thereby the deep rancour against those who were known to people only in the shape of *abarroteros* who with unrelenting contempt exploited and fostered their vices, had formed, at Jalisco and in all the West, a party already prevailing and having as coryphæi general Quintanar and major Bustamante who maintaining an active correspondence with the exiled emperor invited him to make his appearance in Mexico as an arbiter between the parties and pushed him to commit this supreme blunder. The letters which Iturbide sent to the Congress pointed out the imminence of the peril; the Congress issued the *atrocious decree*, Zavala says, declaring the liberator an *outlaw*, whereof Iturbide was not aware but after landing in Mexico, and endeavoured to undo the imperialist focus at Jalisco availing themselves of the generals Negrete, Bravo whom the centralists wanted to make a *dictator*

in those days of peril, and Herrera; these men succeeded in their enterprise; they banished the principal chiefs and shot the subalterns.

Congress went on elaborating the Constitution; in it you may note the transcriptions from the Spanish Constitution and that of the United States of the North and study the eminently French, and therefore very little federal, criterion prevailing in its authors. Since the discussion of the constitutive act there was an exhaustive debate on the full federal regime such as it was proposed by the Constitution Commission; father Mier combated pure federalism with irrefragable reasons: *«federation was a means to unite the disunited, therefore the United States had adopted it, because there the whole colonial history exacted the federal pact as the sole possible form of the new nationality; here it was to disunite the united when all things urged the bran-new Mexican nation to become more and more compact, more and more coherent, because although the population disseminated over an immense territory required a certain degree of decentralisation of the administrative power, it needed, in return, a political action accelerating the cohesion movement and repressing the centrifugal tendencies of the extreme districts in order to be able to withstand the national dangers: one imminent coming from Spain, another unfailing threatening from the neighbourhood of the United States whose covetousness and strenght were ever increasing.»*

All this was certain, and the federacy was a work of circumstances then profoundly factitious; however it proved not less certain that prevailing opinion was so utterly favourable to federacy that Congress, had they not decreed so, would have been overthrown directly: the Constitution promulgated in October 1824 could not be anything else than it was: the mere expression of the almost unanimous opinion of the political country at that time. This reason is the actually incontestable one in the manifesto of Zavala that precedes our first Constitution; the others, derived from the *enormous differences* between the regions composing New Spain, would justify dismemberment quite as well as federacy.

The Constitution was simple and showed a wise distribution: members composing the federacy; «organisation of the central power denominated *federal* after the American fashion; classical division of this power into three independent ones although perfectly linked; composition and attributions of each of them; limits of the sovereignty of the States: conditions



Michael Ramos Arizpe

for a reform of the federal pact.» In this regard the Constitution of 1824 is a model of well made laws but besides it contains some dispositions proving the excellent criterion of their authors; the following are the essential ones: division of legislative body in two chambers (this being inherent to the federal regime); election of the senators by the legislatures (this being the natural origin of their powers) and of the deputies by electors of two degrees; the executive power deposited on one person and not on a college (as there had been, with prejudice for their authority, since Iturbide's fall); and renewable every four years which was a grave error; creation of a sovereign judicial power formed by irremovable magistrates, this being equivalent to establishing a centre of stability in the democracy going to be formed and a supreme guarantee of social peace, in constant activity.

When the electoral laws were just ready, even before the promulgation of the political code, the presidential elections were made; the politicians procured electoral mandates from the passive and dumb classes and with general satisfaction Victoria and Bravo turned out elected president and vice-president; the chambers were formed with the best elements then existing in the parties; the supreme Court of Justice was composed of magistrates of high probity and respectability, under the presidency of the old ex-corregidor of Querétaro, Domínguez, and the country entered into normal life. Two causes contributed to it above all. Iturbide having been shot in July of the same year 1824, amidst general stupor, the imperialist party received a blow from which they never recovered and melted in the military conservative party that tended to organise and so, a powerful element of agitation disappeared. The other cause consisted in the financial situation: the army and office-bearers were paid, the country lay quiet and since then this maxim of practical politics became proverbial: when the salaries are paid, the revolutions are quenched. And it was a natural thing in a nation wherein the directing classes by their habits and breeding could only live on the budget; government was only a bank of officers guarded by armed officers called the *army*. This financial situation derived from the easiness of the fisc in consequence of the loans contracted with some English houses; these operations blamed as wanting of ability, and they were really so, are the main origin of the foreign debt of Mexico; under the precarious conditions of our new-born republic it would have been rather difficult to do something better: the result was an obligation in total of more than thirty millions of dollars at an interest of five and six per cent and a net benefice for the government, at the type at which the loans had been taken, of rather more than twenty millions eight of which were spent chiefly on bad ships, bad arms and war equipments because war with Spain seemed impendent and it was necessary to seize Ulua. But this was not the main result of our financial relations with the English market; there was another of supreme importance: the financial relations must necessarily, includibly, be followed by the diplomatic ones and so it happened; the English cabinet's declaration, at the beginning of the year 1824, that they were going to recognise the independence of the Spanish-American republics, completely paralysed the exertions of the Holy Alliance to aid Spain to recover her colonies, and this was unable to prevent the loss of St. John of Ulua it wanted to make our Gibraltar, nor could it take another requital than the ridiculous attempt of Barradas.

Victoria at first maintained the conservative ministry presided over by Alaman, then changed it for one of exalted federalists like Ramos Arizpe, or moderate liberals like Gómez

Pedraza, but the general tone of government was resolutely antispish. The *radical party* availing themselves of the imminence of the national peril, blowing up certain attempts at conspiracy of several Spaniards and making them appear as horrid crimes to punish them unjustly by death, not only wanted to separate the Spaniards from the public offices but considering them as the main obstacle to social reform (abolition of privileges) wherein, to be sure, they were not quite mistaken, they sustained it was necessary to expel them in mass and to confiscate their property and this made all the appetites side with the radical group.

The United States, at the same time as England and in a more explicit way, had received our plenipotentiaries and acknowledged our independence; they had done more: in face of the ostensible combinations of Spain and the Holy Alliance in order to reconquer us, President Monroe in December 1823, had formulated in a famous message to Congress, the declaration known under the name of *Monroe doctrine* which might be summed up thus: «For the government of the United States it is a principle conformable to their rights and interests that Continental America cannot be considered a dominion proper for colonisation by any European nation; any European attempt to obtain the submission of any American people having realised their independence or to exercise any action over their destinies will be deemed a manifestation of hostility to the United States.»



José Joaquín Herrera

In face of the foolish threats of Spain and obeying the suggestion of the federalist ideas a considerable group of Mexican politicians, feeling sure the Americans would never try by force to stretch over our territory their expansion movement (Zavala), leant towards all American things looking for their irrealisable models in the Institutions and virtues of the great Saxon people. The American plenipotentiary Poinsett, a man of high breeding, fond of making proselytes and identified with the antispish ideas of the radicals, determined them to create a political association in which he, of course, did not figure as a member, but whose oracle he seems to have been; this club had for its aim to combat all those who in government, Congress or society pretended to moderate or repress the tendencies of the *exaltados* and in order to attain this aim it was urgent to colleague other elements of the executive and legislative powers and to put them into a vigorous competition with the former. Hence, under the patronage of

the ministers of Finance, Esteva, of Justice, Ramos Arizpe, of the exaltado representative Alpuche Infante, of Zavala and others, *la logia yorquina* (the York lodge) arose aspiring to be the *society of jacobins* of the Mexican revolution. Poinsett facilitated the organisation; the Scottish lodges were quite deserted; in every State there were established branches of the new apostolate where all political, local and federal, affairs were discussed; these lodges soon became an actual government aspiring to submit Victoria's complaisant government. This, notwithstanding the financial ease obtained by the loan and the prestige gained by the surrender of Ulua, saw the dawn of bad days; they had not availed themselves of the fair financial situation to organise public revenue; they piteously squandered the few millions the Mexican government could dispose of and in the interval of a few short months the two London houses that had contracted the Mexican loans had been declared bankrupts, thus being stopped the momentaneous fountain of fiscal resources. Moreover an encyclical of pope Leo XII condemning the independence of the colonies had caused a profound perturbation of consciences; but in spite of the attitude of Rome, considering the faculties granted, as we saw in the second part of these studies, by the Church to the kings of Spain, had been inherited by the Mexican government which, in consequence, exercised the *patronage*, the minister of Ecclesiastical affairs intervened in the administration of the Church; civil war was hovering in the atmosphere.

There was a sort of political ebullition going on throughout the country; following the example of the capital where two newspapers, *El Sol* (The Sun), organ of the Scottish and the *Correo de la Federación* (Federation Courier), organ of the Yorkish, eagerly combated one another, news papers were founded in the States and journalists and literates were improvised; the States finished off their particular constitutions and the struggle between the Yorkish and the Scottish brought as a result that the elections profoundly stirred the masses because all endeavoured to draw therefrom elements of triumph; this was a germ of democratic activity that afterwards became atrophied. The Congresses were busy either in discussing the possible phases of a *concordat* with Rome as ecclesiastics and canonists were abounding therein, or by initiative of government, in discussing a project of armed aid to the Cubans who according to a Committee of banished insulars settled in Mexico craved to proclaim their independence; besides they suspended the guarantees against robbers and highwaymen infesting the roads and against the *factions*, this being a monstrosity. But what proved all imposing, by the systematically fostered excitement of public opinion, was the *question of Spaniards*; armed parties requested their expulsion in various parts of the country; several legislatures decreed it for their States and Congress (the second constitutional one in which the Yorkish element prevailed) decreed the expulsion of all the Spanish military men there were in the country, of all the Spaniards arrived since 1821 and of all deemed suspicious by government; the remaining ought to renew their oaths of allegiance. Generals Negrete and Echávarri went away banished, groups of missionaries left the Republic and consternation obtained among the upper classes and the lower ones; nevertheless the Yorkish bourgeoisie pursued undauntedly their purpose. The decree that had been issued was the extreme apparently demanded by circumstances.

Against this preponderance of the Yorkish the moderate and conservative elements, the Scottish, attempted an armed reaction (the plan of Montañón), headed by the grand-

master Nicholas Bravo and which general Guerrero caused to fail; the reactionists demanded the extinction of masonry, the renovation of the ministry and the expulsion of Poinsett.

This definitive triumph of the Yorkish divided them; those who wished to go ahead in the question of Spaniards and reforms, grouped around general Guerrero; those who thought it was time to detain revolution lest it would prove a failure proclaimed the candidature of Gomez Pedraza, the war minister, for the presidency of the Republic. Gomez Pedraza was a former royalist officer, afterwards addicted to Iturbide whose fall had produced in him a terrible hatred against the Spaniards, well bred, a most remarkable orator and a perfectly emancipated mind; his grave character and his talent made him, only in this regard, very superior above general Guerrero whose merits for his country were immense, but who, for his absolute want of culture, seemed destined to be tutored by his partisans and above all by the most active, intelligent and feared of them, Zavala. It was certain that pressure exerted by the minister and even by the president himself had brought about the result that a majority of legislatures gave their suffrage for Gomez Pedraza; when learning this result, Santa Anna pronounced for Guerrero and this has been the example that opened the bloodiest furrow in our history. Santa Anna, routed and shut up at Oaxaca had no escape; but Revolution had spread over several States; the local militia that were organising with the aim



Emmanuel Gomez Pedraza

to withstand the military commanders nominated by the Federacy, prepared to second the movement that at last broke out at Mexico (revolution of the *Acordada*) organised by Zavala and headed by Lobato and Guerrero himself. Gomez Pedraza and the other ministers fled; Victoria met the rebels as a suppliant in order to prevent misdeeds; but for the heads of the revolution themselves, even for Zavala, in spite of his energy, it proved impossible to contain the unchained hosts that plundered the National Palace and the rows of Spanish shops called the *Parian* in the very place of Mexico. Victoria nominated Guerrero minister of war; Congress, violating legal suffrage, proclaimed him president and general Bustamante vice-president; the federal system had dishonoured itself, unfortunately.

We have been rather prolix in circumstantiating the facts that gave rise to the political parties which afterwards contended for power in endless civil struggles; we thought this

indispensable for the understanding of their further evolution we purpose to make a rapid sketch of.

General Guerrero's administration was a still-born one; in order to legitimate the usurpation committed by means of the assent of the country and the adherence of the army it was necessary to propose a very plain programme and to carry it out with great energy and sound judgment; even thus they were not likely to achieve great things: the transition from colonial to self government had been so sudden, so little prepared by political and social habits, had stirred up so many elements of disorder and anarchy, had created so many factitious energies, rousing at every step such a whirl of discontent and kindling so many flames of hatred, that many years must pass before the earthquake would cease and the Republic would become settled by means of a radical transformation of its economical conditions. The evil lay at the bottom of things and was unavoidable; to get a clear account of the relative goodness of the governments that succeeded in Mexico after the finest pronunciamiento of the Acordada, we must apply this criterion: how far did they increase or diminish and neutralise the evils of an incurable situation?

The expulsion of the Spaniards decreed by Congress, an atrocious, needless and absurd step under its social aspect (only consider that, however grave defects might be attributed to the Spanish group with morbid exaggeration, a Mexican group would have derived therefrom in the next generation) was a supreme political blunder, because it was to waive a weapon wherewith to baffle all devices of reconquest Spanish government might cherish. After this measure which the government of Guerrero deemed obligatory for themselves as a fulfilment of an imperative mandate, a war with Spain, actually not existing, could be foreboded as certain; and it was clear that an invasion would not triumph, but it was evident that to be able to withstand, the financial situation, disastrous already would become complicated to a degree very difficult to foresee; certainly, government would be able to elude it by means of bankruptcy and fraudulent insolvency, but then the credit of the Republic would be ruined for ever and this would cease to be an appreciable entity in the progress of mankind.

Zavala, Guerrero's minister of Finance, traced a quite sensible plan of financial reorganisation and far from deceiving the country as general Victoria's Finance minister had constantly done, he displayed in relieve the almost insurmountable difficulties of the situation and bravely stated the problem; but the financial problem cannot be definitively resolved without securing the road to resolution for the economical problem and this was an impenetrable gloom wherein an almost dead society lingered hardly breathing. The expulsion of the Spaniards, the Guerrierist revolution and the deplorable events that marked its triumph, had quenched with one blow, in European mercantile centres, all hope that a fully responsible nation would ever contrive to get organised here and commerce began to lead a precarious creeping life between the hungry exactions of the fiscal agent and contraband organised as a national institution. The jobbers speculating on the hunger and misery of government saw their field open and began their plain system of bleedings on an anæmic organism and so during more than half a century hindered the Republic to go ahead; the typical operation was this: government was granted a loan of a small sum to satisfy the needs of the following day; this sum was delivered in part (the smaller) cash and in part

(the greater) in paper of the national debt acquired at a low price and accepted by government at par; a big interest was pactured on the total sum and reimbursement was made by means of custom house orders that were sold to importers. The throttling robbery of this system was visible, but it soon ceased to be a scandal, because society and government got accustomed to it and submitted like slaves; this was the *empire of agio*, the actual form of government the new nationality was obliged to live under with different *labels*: federalism, centralism, dictatorship.

Zavala tried to struggle by certainly arbitrary but necessary measures; all the money absconded; he tried to restore foreign credit by assigning a part of the revenue to paying the unpaid interests of the exterior debt; he was unable to maintain this measure; the sole good thing he contrived to attain was the suppression of the government tobacco monopoly, the *estanco*, that choked in germ one of the richest branches of our incipient agriculture. But war drew near; a scanty body of Spanish troops landed on the oriental coast and the Republic, with a thousand sacrifices, contrived to oppose them a hardly bigger army and made an exhaustive exertion to withstand a much larger army supposed to follow behind the van-guard under the command of Barradas, and the agiotists, ironically smiling, took anew possession of the Finance ministry: it was necessary to live albeit with the cord round the neck. The self-possession, intelligence, serenity and high valour of general Mier and Terán, together with general Santa Anna's temerity obliged the invaders to capitulate at Tampico, after most obstinate combats in which the Spanish officers saw with surprise that the Mexican soldier when he feels sure (effect of a wonderful instinct) his chiefs mean to fight until death and give him an example, will match the first soldier in the world.

The antipathy inspired by the minister of Finance to whom all violent measures and radical projects were attributed and whose friendship for plenipotentiary Poinsett was a motive for hatred; the ill dissimulated contempt Guerrero inspired in a society boasting of good breeding without having anything more thereof than *the good manners*; the irresoluteness of the president and the division among the members of the Cabinet printed such a stamp of weakness on the situation that even the victory at Tampico was not enough to remedy it, notwithstanding the enthusiasm it produced because all were aware that it marked the end of the attempts of a Spanish reconquest.

But the frustrated invasion had produced a twofold interior result: the necessity of gathering an army wherein to join the rests of the veteran army; the formation of civic militia bodies in the States giving them ground to consider themselves nearly independent nations; and by this fact a rivalry began to arise between the national guard and the army and which fatally was to lead to a struggle between the centralist and federalist principles. Guerrero's government felt that public force had passed into other hands, generals Bustamante and Santa Anna cutting a better figure in the country than the president who to conjure the tempest sacrificed minister Zavala, gave Bocanegra the portfolio of Foreign Relations and requested the withdrawal of Poinsett; but the Yorkish party vanquished by the rebellion of the *Acordada*, together with the Scottish party and sustained by all the conservative elements choked the penniless and moribund government. At the end of 1829 a military revolution broke out at Campeche and soon mastered the peninsula; this rebellion, outcome of a conflict between the unpaid federal troops and local government unwilling

to pay for the sake of the government at Mexico, broke out at some officers orgies and proclaimed *centralism*, a strange thing in a State visibly longing for autonomy, but which finds its explanation in the circumstance that in this way the hated constitutional governor (an unimpeachable citizen) was upset and that, the Republic being federal, the way to oppose it, was to be *centralist* and as the reasons for separation proceeded from the incompatibility of the economical interests, the rigorous military government inaugurated by the centralists proved popular during some time and lasted as long as Bustamante's administration.



The Paran

The reserve army, at the end of 1829, rebelled at Jalapa; Bustamante and Santa Anna were expected to head the movement; but the latter retracted remaining thus in disposition for the next *revolution* as every military revolt was styled. The Jalapa plan maintained Federalism, speaking of discontent, of breaches of the law, of the army unheeded, i.e. not paid; of abuses, of the necessity to prevent anarchy and claimed *in virtue of the right of petition* that government should waive its extraordinary faculties and convoke the *august Chambers that ought to remedy the evils of the Country*. This platform was ridicule and nevertheless, such was the social discredit of Guerrero's administration that it was applauded by all. Guerrero set out to combat the rebellion directing his march

southward with a small army parting therefrom at last. In Mexico there remained supplying Guerrero, his minister Bocanegra, against whom the garrison revolted; an interim government was formed by the president of the Court of Justice and two counsellors, Bustamante occupied the capital and the reserve army, offspring of the tripartite, was now denominated *protector of the Constitution*.

Certainly, the rising was not without a pretext: Guerrero's authority, in rigour, was unconstitutional, but vice-president Bustamante's had no other source and therefore the Chambers, meeting in January 1830 did not annul Guerrero's election but declared him *morally inapt* to govern. That was a legislative farce; for the deposed president it was the

beginning of a tragedy. General Bustamante, the terrible royalist officer, the discussible hero of Juchi, the headstrong Iturbidist, and, out of hatred for Iturbide's enemies, exaggerate federalist afterwards, was a man fond of energetic measures, albeit bloody ones, being convinced, and may be he was right, that in order to discourage the anarchy jobbers terrible punishments were urgently needed (he excepted himself from this group confounding his own ambition with the interest of his country). Valorous, serious, reflective and honest he represented a general aspiration for stability which the conservative classes that propped him, of course, confounded with stagnation.

His ministry, presided over by Alaman (Foreign Relations) and including the intriguing and resolute colonel Facio (War) and judicios Mangino (Finance), was of a marked reactionary disposition; the privileged classes, hurt by the expulsion of the Spaniards, frightened by the anterior government's tendencies, felt themselves represented in the new one and expected its corypheus to strive to centralise and conserve, under the transparent mask of federalism, whatever in the new Mexico might survive of the colonial Mexico.

The whole year 1830 was spent in pacifying the country; several States formed coalitions to defend themselves against the central government and the army that spitefully compared their own misery due to the almost constant lack of pay, with the welfare of the punctually paid national guards of the States; others, like Yucatan and Tabasco continued separated from the federal pact; Texas, completely americanised, was gravitating more and more towards its natural centre at Washington; the southern part of the States of Michoacan whose Governor had risen in arms, of Puebla, Mexico (the territory of the present State of Guerrero) and Oaxaca, were kindled by the Guerrerist insurrection and the ex-president, although diseased and retired, was the centre of this vast movement. According to their purpose quite explainable from the vanquishers stand point, a system of military terror was adopted and repression became everywhere bloody: nearly all the heads of armed resistance were executed; the press was silent (only two political newspapers were published in Mexico), some deputies were furiously persecuted and the whole hard and brutal system, we dare not add *needless*, because the civil war must be ended by all means, but often unjust and blind, finished with a great crime, the execution of general Guerrero, *father of the fatherland* and a man of unimpeachable sentiments, genuine representative of rural, fair, ardent and



Anastasio Bustamante

honest, and under his auspices never sanguinary, patriotism. What filled public conscience with indignation was the iniquitous perfidy with which Guerrero was captured at Acapulco by an abominable Italian and the stupendous forgetfulness the military judges showed for the deserts of the unfortunate general whom the parties wanted to make a politician while he only was a great Mexican.

The Republic, big with ferments of revolt, submitted and was pacified as a matter of fact. This circumstance had somewhat raised national credit; abroad they had not yet lost the conviction that Mexico possessed marvellous riches whose exploitation was hampered by the insecurity consequent of the civil discords; the mining enterprises partly abandoned recovered new breath and the English capitals that had fed them began anew to move in direction towards the Republic; exterior commerce increased at the same rate as inland traffic and revenue rose; government, having found the fisc in full bankruptcy and by the system of partial loans (*agio*) hardly lived under constant anguish day for day, ever increasing the interior debt to such a degree that the net produce of revenue not exceeding three hundred thousand pesos a month scarcely sufficed to pay the civil and military lists of the federal District, government, being able to breathe, could begin a rudimentary work of emancipation from the agiotists and once more pay the interests of the foreign debt.

Alaman in full conformity with the ideas he had professed all his life got some measures decreed to prohibit the settling of Americans on the northern frontiers (a most imprudent act of hostility never pardoned by our neighbours) and organised an utterly artificial protection for the still unborn vernacular industries. He established a bank that was to live on part of the produce of the protection duties paid by importation and was to supply machinery and money to the future manufacturers. Alaman's theories were oldfashioned routine, his procedures were practical and efficacious; it is, certainly, impossible to deny that *free trade*, like all freedom, is an ideal, the aim of an evolution and it is certain too, that a nation surrounded with tariff walls cannot be but a remora to human solidarity, but never a politician will pass from one extreme to the other else than slowly and gradually. However it is inadmissible to create by importation tariffs such industries as have not their *raw material* in the protected country; it was useless to want to make the Mexican Republic a manufacturing country without roads, without fuel and without iron, without a consuming population; national industry was vegetating and nothing more; only when the economical conditions began their organic transformation, the problem of national work could be settled on definitive ground.

The existence of stocks of cash in the custom houses of the Gulf and the eagerness of speculators to obtain at a low price importation permits which Bustamante's administration had contrived to bring near par, determined an exclusively military revolt at Veracruz, under the auspices of Santa Anna who feared a presidency of general Mier and Teran (a man of superior endowments who had got the votes of the legislatures and soon after, committed suicide at Padilla) or of general Bravo who was to replace him, more than even Bustamante's.

The Veracruz revolution met with a tremendous defeat inflicted by the government forces; but the advanced federalist party that had its stronghold in Zacatecas where governor Garcia had gathered plenty of military resources, determined a conflagration in the interior.

Bustamante went out to detain the advancement of the federalist militias and routed them; but all had become complicated, the rebellion spread under the legal banner that all things were to be restored into the state they were in the year 1828 and consequently the installation of Gomez Pedraza in the constitutional presidency. As soon as Bustamante became convinced that civil war might continue indefinitely, he pacted a compromise with Santa Anna (convention of Zavaleta, December 1832), obliged his army to acknowledge the new order of things and although Congress, with lofty civism, refused to admit what the generals had convened without legal authorisation, they must yield and Santa Anna with his army denominated *liberator* (third transformation of the triguarant army in ten years) occupied the capital.

The era of the Mexican pronunciamientos began, it may be said, in Spain, the classical land for military rebellions in our century; nowhere the army considered they had a plainer right to interpret the voice of the Nation while interpreting only the voice of the covetous appetites of their chiefs or those who moved them, than in the Spanish countries. In Mexico the example given by the mother-country in this regard, caught wonderfully; the bourgeois riot at Aranjuez against Godoy had its correspondent here in the revolt of the merchants against Iturrigaray; the



Emmanuel Mier and Teran

popular rising against the French found an answer in ours against the Spaniards in 1810; Riego's pronunciamiento against absolutism in 1820 found an eco in that of Iturbide against Spanish domination. Since then our *pronunciamientos* continued as in Spain, but on our own account. Iturbide is overturned by the Spanish element preponderant in the army and in government; but this reaction could not but be ephemeral and Mexico constituted herself into a federaey as a species of armed mechanism against Spanish influence; the new system was regarded as the consummation of the independence and the first years of our national political history are dominated by the fear of an invasion from Spain, by the wish to pull out even with its social roots the Spanish predominance in the young Republic. The rising,

we are not to call it popular (*people* is an historically sacred name) but demagogic, of the *Acordada* had but very little military about it; the leaders fell upon the budget to squeeze it, their followers invaded the Parian to plunder it, the army took their requital by the rebellion of Bustamante at Jalapa and the military regime ruled, fully for the first time; it did not reach its apogee, its apogee was Santa Anna, but it domineered the country and stained it with blood as it is wont to do. In countries sick with chronic anarchy this is sometimes a remedy, provided that peace obtruded by fear is followed by peace consented by social welfare, economical peace, to say so; Bustamante's government had neither time nor the mind to make the best of two years of political and financial order; the economical and social problem, the existence of privileged classes and the monstrous distribution of public wealth had no actuality for them; they looked for the remedy creating factitious industries that detained the progress of the masses making them tributaries to most deficient industrial groups and fostering contraband that corroded the main branch of our revenue.

The reaction that pulled down Bustamante was directed by men exasperated by the political executions that had filled the country with gallows and by the streams of blood running during the civil war; the overthrown administration was in their eyes a black trinity: president Bustamante and his two sinister ministers, Facio and Alaman, and before them rising from hell the satanic figure of Judas Picaluga and between this shade and this abyss the corpse of Guerrero pierced with Mexican balls.

The revolution had palliated its enterprise with the pretext to resume the interrupted constitutional legality; hence the leadership of the legitimate president of 1828, Gomez Pedraza, who made his appearance with a sensible and cool platform, a true doctrinary's creed, meaning to render revolutions impossible by means of juridical definitions, as though such a thing were feasible while the evolution of the social conditions did not cause the instinct to conserve in peace the supreme guarantee of productive work, to prevail in the country over the hope to attain by sudden changes indefinite and indefinable improvements. The only thing the nation understood in Pedraza's platform was that he would elect Santa Anna who thus, after a perpetual adventurership, at length came to power. At the shade of the idol whose portraits were carried in procession by the crowds on motley triumphal cars and in whose laud infantile hymns were intoned with rudimentary music and literature, the new party, the radical one, that from the Yorkish lodges had gone into the street, to revolt, to civic militia, to prison, to bloody rout and wild craving for vengeance, exalted to vice-presidency Dr. Valentin Gomez Farias and peopled with obscure rancours, with longings for reform and inexpert audacities the curules of the new Congress, following that which had so manly defended the legitimacy of Bustamante's presidency and of general Muzquiz's interreign against triumphant Santa Anna and even against discouraged, surrendered and disarmed Bustamante himself.

The Spanish government, showing as it had always done in American affairs an astonishing myopy, notwithstanding the ministry, during the long period of Ferdinand VII's agony, had published a programme of *enlightened despotism*, notwithstanding all were convinced of the uselessness of Spain's attempts in her former colonial dominions and that the French revolution of 1830 had overthrown the Holy Alliance, persisted in not understanding that the only means to transform the situation of the Spaniards in New Spain was to acknow-

ledge their independence. As long as this was not done, there remained in Mexico a considerable political group believing it was a duty for them to pursue the plan of persecution against the Spaniards either in order to liberate them by banishment from dreadful popular misdeeds or to punish them for the misdemeanour committed actually by some and with their wishes by all of them aiding such governments as, like that of Bustamante, had ceased to persecute them considering as dead letters the barbarous proscription laws. Gomez Pedraza, a man of character and moderate ideas, admitted of no compromise in the question of Spaniards and almost his first act of government was to reenact expulsion in all its rigour.

General Santa Anna yielded power to Gomez Farias and the extreme Yorkish party, *the pure*, as they were called to distinguish them from those who wished for reforms only



Old Conception Fort, at Veracruz

by half. The party taking office was apparently a minority in the country; the agricultural masses, natives and mestizoes, served with the arms him who disposed of greater power at any given spot undoing the rural family by snatching therefrom with the *levy* both father and sons, had no other guide or light or plan as their priests and their superstitions; the urban popular masses obeyed their masters; so both were negative quantities; the landowners, the merchants, the men of breeding and liberal professions, the workers of some independence, formed the oligarchy together with the office-bearers, the army and the clergy.

This oligarchy was divided, the aristocratic and privileged part, which was the majority, was composed thus: the wealthy, nearly all of them retired from public business through feeble-mindedness, through egoism, *because in politics there meddle only those who have nothing to lose*, a maxim constantly repeated in the drawing room, in the manor-house, in the vestry; this class, had it been able to do so, would have resuscitated the quietness of the viceregal times; the men in office who were conservatives nearly all of them, and, above

all, were enemies of whatsoever might jeopardise their adhesion to the clergy and religion; in this group the emancipate individuals were very few, remnants of the expiring masonry; however, those functionaries served him who paid them and conspired, with an underhand, tenacious and stubborn social conspiracy, against him who paid them not; the high clergy, which was more and more resolved to defend their privileges, their *fueros*, especially since the Pontiff had given the Mexican church new chiefs (men of eminent wisdom and virtues) and had settled that full patronage could belong only to the kings of Spain and not to their heirs by force, the American governments. On the other hand, among the lower clergy reformist and liberal ideas were rife, not a few of them being, in the legislatures of the States and in the press, the promoters of radical measures tending to suppress the privileges and to establish religious toleration: they were the offspring of Hidalgo and Morelos. The army were fluctuating: to serve government was their general duty, to follow their chiefs was their concrete duty; they performed any part, their union with the clergy was the work of centralism; these were the components of the oligarchy's larger fraction.

The lower middle class, that hated the Spaniards, the young lawyers and scientists, most of them, the politicians who coveted, *the new* who ambited, and at the head of this intellectual phalanx passioned for equality and recruiting mainly in the capitals of the States, a group of thinking patriots who perhaps were advanced beyond their times and certainly above the social medium they were surrounded by, such were the elements that constituted the fraction of the oligarchy called *reformist*; this tended to increase, to multiply and to get renewed by means of the forces that in slow and small groups came up to her from the inferior classes through the schools and the political associations and meetings where a constant propaganda was made; such was this oligarchic group in its necessary democratic transformation; in the year 1833 they were in power.

Their platform steered towards economical and social reform; it was an enterprise of emancipation, a forcible consequence of the work of the great insurgents of 1810; twenty years afterwards the succeeding generation tried to destroy colonial regime in the part most deeply rooted in society, the uncontested tutelage of the Church; the matter was, in one word, to convert Mexican society into a laical society. The first blows had been struck by the Spanish government: the expulsion and spoliation of the Company of Jesus contained in germ the nationalisation of the ecclesiastical estates and for the same reason the impossibility for the State to sub-sist having within itself another officially recognised State, whose head was a foreign prince, the Pope; the reformist doctrines of men like Mora, Gomez Farias, Zavala, were a philosophical and economical amplification of the narrow and authoritarian royalist doctrines of Cano, Macanaz and the ministers of Charles III; the aspirations of the reformists had their historical origin in the votes of the municipalities that from the very first colonial century requested the kings to forbid the establishment of more convents and churches and to limit the number of monks. The immediate reason of the reformists lay in the question of the *patronage*; the Pope had anathemised independence and ignored the new nationality; afterwards he had treated with her extra-officially and filled the vacant sees; the Mexican government had believed to be allowed to propose bishops and to intervene in the management of the Church being heir to the king of Spain; the Pope and the bishops were quite right to say: «Nay, this privilege was a personal one of

the kings, intransmissible and always revokable by the Church.» This was evident and if it was not quite so, it was certainly controvertible that, inasmuch as the kings, in compensation of that privilege, had heaped on the American churches partial privileges constituting their *fueros* or charters (exemption from taxes and the right of the individuals of both clerics to be judged only by persons of their own class) and allowing them to acquire an immense landed wealth on the basis of direct donations of the Crown, the new government whose patronage was disowned, might think fit to withdraw the partial privileges, to suppress the *fueros* and to recover a good deal of the Church's territorial wealth. An agreement with the Pontiff, a *concordat*, would have put off the blow for long time; but the Roman Curia withstood and evaded with its characteristic policy of dilations and tardy concessions in face of the irresistible irruption of the new ideas. And of these ideas the reformists of 1833 were fervent apostles; they were not anticlericals as they were derided, most of them even being good catholics; but saturated with cravings for equality and economic-political principles, they aimed at three objects that were attained only by the generation that followed them: to put an end to the ecclesiastical *fueros*, to get the mortmain estates (that could not be alienated) enter into the general circu-



Melchior Múzquiz

lation of wealth and to transform by means of education the minds of the new generations; without this it would not be possible to establish religious freedom or liberty of conscience, basis of all others. The Church would never consent to this having proclaimed so and quite correctly: the denial of the liberty of conscience was the very reason of her authority.

The vice-president, agreeing with president Santa Anna, full of fears and rancours, thought first of disarming any resistance by bereaving it of its leaders, and hence the law of the case, law of arbitrariness and vengeance, that proscribed *ad libitum* a considerable group of Mexicans, after inflicting on them iniquitous maltreatments; ex-president Bustamante was the first proscribed. Some left the country; others, statesmen, bishops, writers, absconded; Bustamante's ministers were impeached for the infamous political murder of

Guerrero of which not all of them were responsible as it became fully demonstrated by the process of Alaman.

Society was profoundly shaken; the clergy denounced government as being resolved to destroy religion and the religious performances to solicit divine protection and the laments of the prophets and the miseries united with the utter fright caused by the invasion of cholera combated by the authorities with thousand measures of seclusion, isolation and social silence that gave a dreadful aspect to the towns deserted by day, illuminated by night with tar fires at whose resplendence the *litters* of death were seen to come and go or the



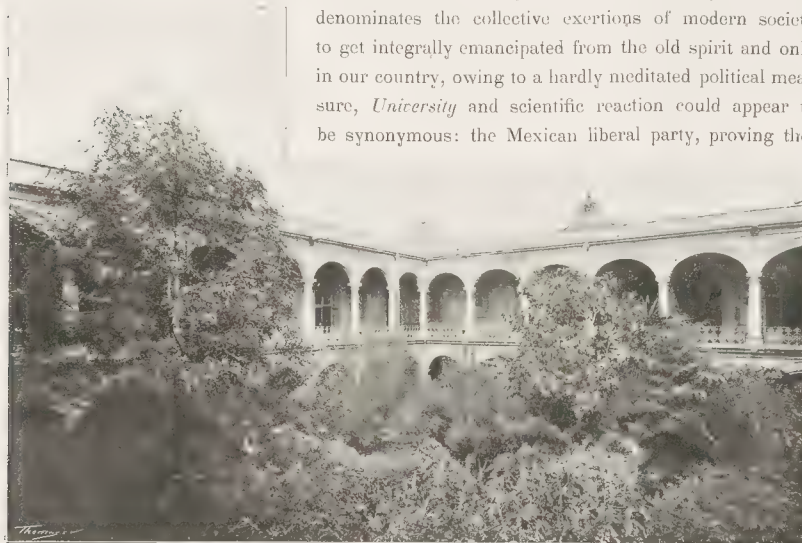
Antonio Lopez of Santa Anna.

priests toilsomely carrying here and there the succour of religion; heaven's punishment was evident, that impious government attracted on the Republic the utmost calamities; so the Church clamoured and society suffered. And those men of the steely temper of the jacobins of the great revolution never desponded: the liberal press gave vent to acerb censures against the clergy without attacking religion, on the contrary, confronting crudely the behaviour of the clergy with the maxims of the Gospel; in some States the press had excited furiously the minds of people and several legislatures decreed the occupation of the ecclesiastical estates and the suppression of the religious communities, of the coercion to pay tithes, etc. Congress

discussed the most advanced bills, preliminary chapters of the definitive reformist movement that was to break out twenty years later on and even carried some most important general measures converted into dead letters by an immediate reaction, but marking the goal of their future longings for the liberal group which the centralist despotisms were going to enrich with experience, with men and with hatreds.

Government, exercising the right of patronage they feigned to believe themselves invested with, bestowed parsonships, excluded certain candidates from ecclesiastical benefices, as the viceroys had done and derogated the installations of canonships; established exact requisites for the circulation in the Republic of the edicts (bulls) of the Pontiff; suppressed civil coercion in the matter of ecclesiastical vows and the payment of tithes; in the States parsons were forbidden to exact personal labour and to found fraternities, and endeavours

were made to eradicate the indigenous custom to convert the ecclesiastical holidays into orgies and ominous farces, rendering impossible the savings of the agricultural labourer and the artisan and keeping them in idolatry, habits which the Church for her own decorum ought to have suppressed. All these measures aimed at the present; it was needful to prepare the future; the University was suppressed by the spirit to improve destroying instead of transforming to improve; it would have been well to create instead of the pontifical University, a national and eminently laical one; the Universities were the medieval focuses of instruction constantly adulterate but constantly nourished with a laical spirit of emancipation and science; to-day this name is precisely that which denominates the collective exertions of modern society to get integrally emancipated from the old spirit and only in our country, owing to a hardly meditated political measure, *University* and scientific reaction could appear to be synonymous: the Mexican liberal party, proving the-



Court of the former University, to-day Musical Conservatoire

rein quite latin, always had the superstition of words. The University being suppressed, the studies were organised upon new and more rational plans, granting scientific instruction a great part and promoting by an enormous effort the propagation of primary teaching, obligatory basis of the gradual selection that was to constitute the groups of preparatory and professional teaching; it was a scheme of education of democracy and of the creation of a Mexican people conscious of their right.

The reactionist elements struck in their hearts struggled desperately for life; their road was a natural one; the reformist government leaned at Mexico and, above all, in the States on the national militias, on the *civics*; so it pretended to eliminate and afterwards suppressed the army whose *fueros* were a constant matter for discussion; therefore the interests of the Church and of the Army were identical; of course, they being the *privileged classes*. Thus the pronunciamientos began, with the particularity that all of them recognised the presidency of Santa Anna who several times even was proclaimed a dictator. The president

from time to time exercised the power of his authority, actually suspended the reformist work and took arms to pacify the country, he happening some times to be captured by the forces that had pronounced on behalf of his ascension to absolute power, this giving rise for utterly ridiculous demonstrations of adhesion of the federal Congress to the cunning general who had precisely kept aloof from the reformist movement, in order to prove its actual author in the case of triumph or to turn its failure to account, maintaining himself on his estate at Veracruz like a pharos of hope for the social majority, deeply shaken, afflicted and irritated.

A riot in the capital itself, repressed with admirable personal integrity by the vice-president, the declaration of the state of siege, the calling out of the civic militia, determined president Santa Anna to intervene simulating an escape from the hands of his jailers-partisans; when he arrived at Mexico, he declared himself addicted to the reformists in order to win their confidence while ripening his plans; he still made some campaigns against the revolted generals and at the beginning of 1834 the president had manoeuvred with so much astuteness that both of the struggling parties relied on him. In April of that year Santa Anna on a sudden occupied the presidency, dissolved the Congress, caused Gomez Farias to leave the country, persecuted the reformists, derogated all the reform laws, called a conservative cabinet to office and received the immense applause of the society rid of those rash emancipates who, feeling to be a minority, had undertaken a fundamental work that was to be prosecuted some day unless Mexico renounced to occupy a place among the representatives of modern culture.

General Santa Anna was a man who possessed the amount of intelligence needed to procure the full development of that faculty composed of dissimulation, perfidy and perspicacity which is called *astuteness*. Utterly ignorant he lacked not the odd gift to return his counsellors as his own the thought they had communicated him; immensely ambitious with an ambition centuplicated by his conviction he was the founder of the Republic and exercised a conqueror's right; this ambition was his sole religion kneaded together with a little catholic superstition and an ingenuous belief in himself and his providential role. Having the vanity of a mulatto he was utterly accessible to adulation and incense made him dizzy and proud puffing him up like an African sultan; having no principles of any kind, not feeling scruples about anything, enjoying an immense prestige among the troops which felt he was their own; alien to military science but capable to undertake any political or warlike enterprise, not having any more qualities thereunto than those of imparting his ardour to the soldiers, of defying undaunted any danger and of disdaining all precautions. This idol of the permanent army, as a military man, never was apt to be more than a colonel of the national guard.

Santa Anna spent the year 1834 in preparing the centralist reaction; in several parts he disarmed the civic militia, dissolved the legislatures, besieged towns and occupied militarily some States while others, as Chiapas and Yucatan, were in anarchy and pronunciamentos broke out everywhere. The predominion of the army eminently favoured the reactionists in the elections for the new Congress that met in January 1835. Then, under the direction of the minister of war and while the president feigned to keep retired on his estate,

pronunciamientos were multiplied on behalf of the reform of the Constitution of 1824. Congress (with an absolute lack of legality) deemed themselves authorised to declare themselves constituent.

The federal system had actually ended; the government of Zacatecas rose in arms to withstand disarmament imposed by means of a law; but Santa Anna vanquished, dissolved the militia and reduced the State to obedience. Before the end of this same year Congress settled the bases of the centralist code. Federacy had lived. Inevitable political error, as nearly all those that made our history a warp of gigantic difficulties comparable only with those Nature placed in the way of our material and moral progress, Federacy, serving as a butt for all classes of reaction, prepared its inevitable and definitive resurrection in the future. This is a historical fact born of transitory circumstances converted by the resistances to the work of social emancipation into necessary conditions of our political existence.



Panorama of Zacatecas

CHAPTER III

CENTRALISM

CONFLICT WITH THE UNITED STATES

(1835-1848)

TEXAS; SANTA ANNA. FIRST CENTRALIST CONSTITUTION; BUSTAMANTE;
 WAR WITH FRANCE. CIVIL WAR; SECOND CENTRALIST CONSTITUTION. DICTATURE; YUCATAN.
 THE NORTH-AMERICAN QUESTION; PROVOCATIONS AND INSULTS. LAST DAYS OF CENTRALISM; WAR WITH
 THE UNITED STATES. FEDERALIST REACTION; SANTA ANNA; THE NORTH-AMERICANS
 IN THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY. END OF WAR;
 THE PEACE OF 1848

THE first three lustra of our national history are dominated by the threat and fear of a conflict with Spain; the death of Ferdinand VII, the rising to office of the Spanish reformist party under the regency of Queen Christina, the terrible civil struggle arisen in the peninsula between absolutist *Carlism* and liberal *Christinism*, the more and more violent measures against the predominion of the Church and clergy, followed by the bloody and dreadful popular scenes that rendered comparatively anodyne and pale the attempts of our Yorkish party to found a laical government in Mexico, all this constituted so utterly distinct a situation from that in which the trials of American reconquest had been begot, that it

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proved impossible to renew them; from there to the acknowledgment of the independence of the former colonies it remained but one step; the Calatrava ministry made it at the end of 1836 and the establishment of friendly relations between Spain and Mexico whose settlement ten years earlier would have prevented so many evils received a solemn diplomatic sanction.

It may be said that federalism, the complaisances towards the United States, the wish to ally with them cherished by the protagonists of our first liberalism, were the necessary consequence of the attitude of Spain. When this began to shift, our anxious looks turned to North, the Texas question appearing on our horizon hardly covering the colossus of strength and appetite whose outline was sketching behind; a fight with Texas was of no significance for the Mexicans; the dread of a war with the United States was prevailing through the whole period of centralism. That fear was a just one; the United States could quickly cut off our communications with the world abroad possessing themselves of our defenceless ports, stop the main fountain of our scanty resources and oblige us to devour ourselves in dark and dreadful civil struggles to dispute each other the keys of public coffers, to dismember us probably and to relapse into barbarity or to shipwreck in an annexation. It was a good luck for Mexico that direct war and armed invasion, although disclosing our inmost weaknesses in all their horror, inflamed our blood, excited the valour of the most unselfish people on earth inasmuch as they did not defend anything positive, but merely something abstract and subjective, and gave a little cohesion to the disaggregated organism of our country.

The most fearful legacy Spain could bequeath us was the immense desert zone, scantily peopled and impossible to render populous regarding its extent, rich in large tracts while irremediably barren in others, extending on our North beyond the course of the rivers Gila and Bravo. Such were the distances that separated this zone from the centre of our political organisation, so great the difficulties to exploit its hardly guessed riches with our mostly irremovable and besides scanty population, so clear the necessary overflowing thereon of the formidable Anglo-American expansion, so naturally the oriental part of that zone (Texas) fell into the sphere of attraction of the steadily progressing United States, that our statesmen ought not to have had any other aim than to give, properly to give that zone that could not be ours, over to colonisation by the world, by Prussians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Spaniards, Chinese, allowing there to be formed a Babel of peoples that would serve as a breakwater against American inroad. But this, easy to conceive to-day and to decide with the nib of the pen, was something impossible for the prejudices and necessary ignorance of our forefathers; we, being of a limper character than theirs, we should have contrived greater mistakes; with their errors our experience is made up.

The covetousness of the United States became manifest by a thousand little attempts to widen their limits since their expansive movement made them neighbours of the fertile, well watered and cattle abounding Texan district. Spanish government endeavoured to be very firm in sustaining their rights and very parsimonious and wary in granting concessions; that which gave rise to American colonisation in Texas, was bestowed on Austin the father, allowing him to settle three hundred catholic families in the provinces. The necessity to rely on the sympathy of the United States and our almost absolute impotency to

uphold our rights obliged us to slight the restrictions and to consent to the fundamental fact; Texas soon became a group of small but active American settlements; the lands yielded there to Mexican citizens, such as Mejia, Zavala and others, were sold to North-Americans who hastened to settle in the rich State. The peril was so apparent and was deemed so imminent that during Bustamante's first administration a law was enacted prohibiting foreigners to acquire landed property in the frontier States, a law aiming at the North-Americans who pursued their slow settler invasion in spite of the military measures adopted by general Mier and Teran. This State, then united to Coahuila, began taking resolutely



Queen Maria Christina of Bourbon

part in the revolution started by the contraband commerce of Veracruz against Bustamante's rigorous administration in 1832 and headed by the inevitable Santa Anna; in the following year it *motu proprio* proclaimed itself sundered from Coahuila. Zavala, landowner there, instigated by his interest, by his intense jacobin and sectarian hatred against catholicism that certainly had then in the Mexican republic the sad aspect of an immense superstition, by his unconditional admiration for the United States and his inborn Yucatecan predilection for federacy and even autonomy and separation of the States, brought to Te-

xas the news of centralism having come into power; the settlers deeply commoved by his eloquent incitements and those of Austin, determined to separate from Mexico and proclaim themselves independent, feeling sure of efficient aid from the United States. It was a sad and inevitable event; all the bands of Texas were between their brethren, there was no intimate one with the Mexicans; unfortunately, the rupture of the federal pact gave the separation that was to happen sooner or later, a strictly legal character. If the Constitution of 1824 had been legally reformed, it is apparent that there was nothing to oblige the federate States to continue united without a new convention that, being a contract, depended on the free will of those who pacted and might not be renewed. If Texas gave not her separation all that solemnity, it was because there had not been a reform of the Cons-

titution in the centralist sense, but a revolutionary suppression of same, proclamation of centralism and convocation of an assembly in order to sanction the fact.

If our politicians had possessed sufficient presence of mind to see matters in this light and, considering legitimate the Texan secession, had pacted advantageous arrangements with the same, the Texan war with its retinue of shame and ruin would have been avoided and therewith the struggle with the United States that was an ineludible consequence of the former.

The separatists being masters of San Antonio and receiving unceasingly arms from the North-Americans, defied the situation and awaited the Mexican armies. The formation of an army destined for a national war (such was the struggle with Texas in the eyes of most Mexicans) was a fat business for Santa Anna and his greedy followers. *Agio* continued presiding over our destinies: the fisc being unable to defray the ordinary charges because the slow accumulation of squandering, disorder and the tremendous deficit added to the former by the liquidation of every triumphant *revolution*, obliged the same to have recourse to the implacable *merchants of Venice* whose fortunes were made with our misfortune. New taxes came one after another while the social mass was unproductive;



Joseph Justus Corro

they produced work on behalf of the master who by means of the rural system *of the shop, of the bond, of the proper coin of every agricultural business* and sometimes of alcoholism practised as a system, maintained in brutishness and in servitude for debt the field labourer, i.e. more than half the population, that with all this indirectly paid the taxes allotted to his master; and being free, having a small business to live on, he paid *the toll and the excise* which consumed two thirds of his earnings and made him look on contraband as a natural emancipation; capitation in some States and the obventions exacted by the Church completed the burden of that heavy machinery crushing all liberty, because it crushed all economical independence, because it crushed saving which the Mexican never knew, never practised. The middle class, both rural and urban, the small farmer, the well-to-do craftsman, the tradesman, these were the main victims of the fisc, these were the eternal sighers

for the triumph of the revolutions, in order to see if the shift brought an alleviation and also was the perpetual victim of extortion and spoliation by the guerrilla commander, the general, the prefect and the governor. The merchant, the landowner, fought strenuously with government, robbed their extortioners by all means they could, defrauded the law with deep devotion and abandoning little by little their business in the hands of foreigners (of the Spaniard who had returned already, the manor, the farm, the victualler's shop; of the Frenchman the clothier's and jeweller's shops; of the Englishman the mining business), took their refuge by little and little, in mass, into office, marvellous normal school for idleness and abuses in which the middle class of our country has been educated. All this explains, why Congresses would grant authorisations to contract loans for a few hundred thousands pesos in which the part received in credits ought not to pass beyond 45 percent, with an interest not above 4 percent a month and a term of four to six months within which all was to be reimbursed at par! With such a regime we were vanquished beforehand; Santa Anna, before entering into campaign and from San Luis Potosí, procured resources which squandering never allowed to last a month, from the clergy, from the mintfarmers, from private persons whom he gave for a dish of lentils first rate national values (the salinas of Peñon Blanco) and even so he was unable to move but with terrible difficulties; nobody was paid.

The Texas campaign disclosed the incapacity of the separatist State to resist with their sole resources the Mexican army which pervaded triumphantly a part of the territory between the rivers Bravo and Sabinas, and the political and military ineptitude of the general of riot and civil war who among the Mexican crowds passed for the genius of war; his policy consisted in exasperating the Texans to paroxysm shooting the prisoners, laying waste the fields and burning down the villages, a vandalic policy that pushed not only the covetousness but the anger of the North-American people on the side of the Texans who rightly invoked the humane feelings of the civilised world against their ferocious invader, whose strategy finally jeopardised all his victorious advances in a temerarious adventure that led him to the disaster of San Jacinto; there the column that marched with him was destroyed and he was made prisoner himself. The fear to lose his life obliged Santa Anna to convert his partial rout into a general disaster and on his order as president of the Republic and generalissimo, the army commanded by Filisola repassed the Bravo. The State of Texas was abandoned; the military question with the rebel State was actually resolved; a new attempt to recover it would place us face to face with the United States.

Under the provisional presidency of a circumspect and well-meaning lawyer, Joseph Justus Corro, they received at Mexico with stupor the news of what had happened in Texas during the last days of April 1836 and while they were taking the measures necessary to neutralise the effects of the disaster and Mexico grew furious against Santa Anna like a lover against an unfaithful mistress whom he is incapable not to continue loving, the deputies nominated under government pressure and in moments when the reformist party lay in that inactivity consecutive to a defeat, elaborated a new political code. In this the conservative oligarchy organised their power and formulated their aspirations, but the majority of the deputies belonged to the moderate and let us say liberal part of that oligarchy.

Under the direct influence of the doctrinaires that governed the monarchy of Louis Philippe our politicians believed with faith that political systems minutely and ingeniously organised may prevent the abuses of power and revolutionary convulsions; hearty enemies of all tyranny, that from below as well as that from above, most devoted to the parliamentary regime founded not on universal suffrage which, in their opinion, did not correspond to any actual need in our country, but on a census regime, they thought they had made such a work of equilibrium between authority and liberty within the range of political centralism and administrative decentralisation deemed necessary by them to maintain united a nation imminently threatened by death, that when they retired after invoking «all-mighty, trinal and one God by whom men are destined to form societies and societies formed are kept up» they thought they had done all in their power for the happiness of their country.

We will not deny their intentions deserve the respect and just appreciation from history; their work was destined to fail because it was too complicated and because the Mexican problem was not of a political nature, it was an economical and social



Lewis G. Calves

problem. Any constitution must needs be unfulfilled and impossible to fulfil; the mission of the constituents, being sure they arranged a necessarily provisional work, ought to have consisted in setting sundry rules of representative organisation, not strictly parliamentary, that is to say, of organisation of an effective and ample government by the president and not by the Parliament, this reserving its intervention mainly for the distribution of the taxes and the vigilance over their spending, of creation of judicial independence destined to guard the guarantees, and of promoting the transformation of Mexican society emancipating it by suppressing privileges and diffusing instruction, opening it amply to the outward currents and to cause the immense sequestered territorial wealth to enter into circulation. It is apparent this would have given rise to a revolution; it is evident this was the needful revolution. In this regard only the reformist party foresaw and was right.

At any rate, the *seven laws constitution* was a very liberal one; rich in its inventory of guarantees, hospitable to foreigners and after the North-American system inviting them to get nationalised with the attrahent of landed property; intolerant in religious matters, but maintaining a remnant of the *patronage* in compensation of that intolerance; endowed with the classical division and regulation of powers, with a bicameral legislative body, the chamber of representatives being founded on a narrow electoral regime not disproportioned to the very scanty suffrage necessities of the country; with an Executive composed of a president to continue eight years in office, a ministry and a Government Counsel; with an irremovable judicial power and a division of the territory into *departamentos* having their elective assemblies with ample administrative faculties. However, the great novelty of the Seven Laws consisted in the institution of a *Conservative Power*, destined to maintain the equilibrium between the powers being authorised to annul their determinations, to suspend their functions, to renew them whenever needed, never intervening *motu proprio*, always at the instigation of an other Power, with a view to prevent tyranny, and having even the right to *declare what was the will of the nation* in extraordinary cases; this tended to prevent revolutions. The Conservative Power was a superfluous wheel in the mechanism, mighty to disturb the movement, unable to facilitate it; a closet lucubration transplanted into the Law to render it ingenious, not to render it viable. In federal Constitutions the true moderator is the Judicial power; but in order to render this effective it has precisely been deprived of the faculty to issue general declarations that might unsettle the mechanism, restraining it to the particular ones that rectify the movement.

The man of that situation of circumspect patriots, of politicians who did not think themselves illuded because their illusion was a retrospective one, anxious to have strong governments but no tyrannical ones, and sincere, although sluggish and timorous, friends of progress, was general Bustamante who entered once more into presidency in April 1837; the centralist regime being given, nobody was apter to consolidate it than he while the conflict with the United States apparently impendent remained unsettled. His ministry was composed of men of patriotism, enlightenment and order; the country was going to revive.

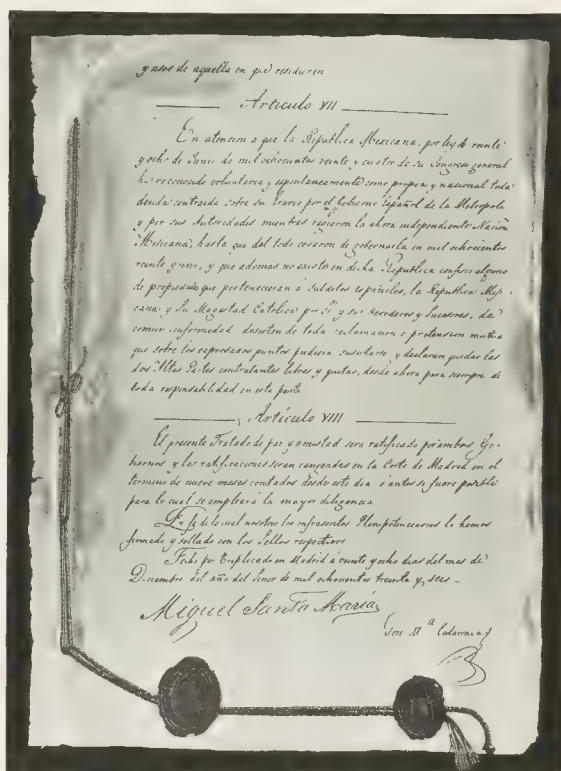
Time was not allowed; at the very moment a humiliation inflicted by the American navy on ours watching the coasts of Texas obliged Government to ask for an authorisation to exact a satisfaction from, or declare war to, the United States. This was a supreme jeopardy drawing near; all our resources, all our power of union and discipline was to be put forth to make us occupy an honourable place before the world; in those very moments a revolt on behalf of Federacy broke out at San Luis Potosí, the actual aim being to catch funds and favour jobs; the revolution was quelled; its head, the brave and feared general Moctezuma perished, much blood and money having been spent in this affair; the point of the bayonet on which we ought to have tendered our *ultimatum* to the United States government, had been broken in Mexican breasts.

The federalist revolt at San Luis caused repercussions in several parts: Yucatan seceded, Sonora risen in arms, New Mexico invaded, Michoacan in flames, demonstrated that no exertion sufficed to pacify the country; it was a useless enterprise, discouragement was profound. Some measure of protection to industry galvanised here and there the social body; soon every thing was again uneasiness, dread, that supreme anxiety caused by the

difficulty to find a living. Then we had to bear with a war with France, an unjust and absurd show of force of Louis Philippe's bourgeois government, destined to weaken us still more before the American conflict that threatened to make us for ever subaltern to a nation which to the detriment of latin interests would impose on us their industries and commerce. Much arrogance within and a very narrow horizon abroad was displayed by the French king's ministers who obliged us to make a quarter wheeling to defend our flank just when we had the enemy in face. The *grocers'* policy of the ministry presided over by M. de Molé deviated from France the soul of a new nation all bent towards her and caused a greater evil: it rendered his prestige to general Santa Anna who with shameful impunity lived on his Veracruz estate since his return from Texas.

This was a sad diplomatic history composed of ridiculously exaggerated reclamations of several Frenchmen, victims like the Mexicans of the misdeeds committed during our civil contentions, and of rational endeavours to exempt Louis Philippe's subjects from forced loans and from the effect of laws that might forbid foreigners to be *retailers*. Demurrings of the Mexican

government endeavouring to gain time and haughty, insolent notes from the French minister brought matters towards war rendered inevitable by an *ultimatum* that shook the Republic with indignation, was commented on in the Chambers with noble and incensed eloquence by the minister of Foreign Relations, Cuevas, and refuted in his lectures to the forensal youth by the severe and righteous science of the eminent magistrate Peña and Peña. The bombardment and capitulation of Ulua heroically defended with forty vetust cannon against one hundred and forty of Baudin's squadron; the attempt against Veracruz in which Santa Anna was gravely wounded while fighting with his habitual dauntlessness and sti-



Fac-simile of last page of treaty of peace with Spain

mulated by his innate love for his native soil and his anxiousness to efface the ominous records of Texas wherein he fully succeeded; then the occupation of the port and, more than two months later, the mediation of England and the convention with France leading to peace and obliging us to pay what we did not owe and what nobody claimed a share of, left our honour unimpaired. On the other hand, the almost impossibility for the nation to find cohesion and life, in spite of all centralism, was proved by the revolt, by the pronunciamientos of all the ports of the Gulf which, barefacedly provoked by the contraband commerce, left us without resources trading with the French.

It is certain that History which in our times aims at being scientific must forbear emotion and concentrate in the statement of the facts, in their analysis and in the coordination of their dominant characters in order to achieve the synthesis; but our history abounds in periods where the repetition of the same errors, of the same faults, by their mournful monotony oppress one's heart with bitterness and sorrow. How much energy misspent, how much force shed in the blood of perennial contentions, how many a poor hearth extinct, how large, how infinite a quantity of individual vexations, preparing the definitive humiliation of the motherland. The foot-pad rife on all roads got confounded with the guerrillero who transformed himself into colonel and ascended to general from riot to riot, aspiring to become president from revolution to revolution; every one of them carried an act of deputy on the point of his sword, a plan in the portfolio of his counsellor, priest, lawyer or merchant, a constitution in his banner to make the happiness of the Mexican people which, bruised and trampled in a bloody mire by all and everywhere, would rise to go to earn his day's wages toiling like a beast of burden or to earn oblivion fighting like a hero. The period extending from the French to the North-American war is one of those dreadful ones of our tragic history. It was reproduced afterwards; however, some light was dawning at the horizon; but before, there was none; it was night...

Bustamante, cool, sceptical, disheartened, not fond of power, calls Santa Anna to yield him the command. Why not, he being the idol, the trivial and eternal seducer of the Republic? When French grapeshot destroyed one of his legs on the Veracruz strand, he sang his own glory, he prescribed for himself martyrdom for his country and with the most deep-felt and theatrical of farewells he reconquered his Mexico's heart; a heroic attitude, a romantic flattering compliment and the nation lay at the feet of that Don Juan of the pronunciamiento, the *Te-Deum* and the forced loan...

The great comedian whose soul was all ambition and vanity, marvellously performed whenever he thought convenient, the role of a feal and disinterested patriot. Being diseased he accepted the provisional presidency and while Bustamante, having under his orders Arista and Paredes, went to Tampico, main focus of the so called federalist revolt, Santa Anna, with a prodigious activity and not waiting for the permission of Congress, contrived to prevent the pronunciamiento of Puebla by his sole presence and went to meet the strong column that with the intent to seize that town, came from Huasteca, having escaped Bustamante's generals; it was headed by two of the boldest and bravest men in the ranks of military federalism, Mejia and Urrea. Being vanquished, the former was shot by order of Santa Anna; the latter, fugitive, returned to Tampico which surrendered at last; he refuged

to Tuxpan that fell at its turn and at length, captured and warranted by a capitulation was brought to Mexico where he conspired tenaciously; when, after Santa Anna's return to his estate, Bustamante, as president, with a moderate ministry, tried a policy of appeasement, Urrea contrived to realise his purpose, raised part of the garrison, roused the mob, possessed himself of the National Palace where he seized the president, called Mr. Gomez Farias, who, since his return from exile, divided his life between his house and prison, and both proclaimed federecy. This stroke of an unheard-of boldness found no echo; government soon isolated the revolted, surrounded them with respectable forces and after several days of combat in the streets succeeded in freeing the president and restore order.

That society, incessantly maimed, without a sun beam to illuminate her top, without hope to reach the resolution of a problem time did not resolve but rather complicate and with a marsh of blood and mud around her stem, felt herself able to live, eager to live, felt her sap, felt her soul. At the first official contact with Spain (sending us, as she always ought to have done, a representative not only of her government but of her literature by means of which the intimate union with the mother could be restored) the tree of the Mexican letters covered itself with sprouts; periodicals, essays of all kinds came to



Joseph Maria Gutierrez Estrada

light; in the books, in the academics, in the theatres, in the festivals something appeared to dawn in the minds, although not at the political sky of the country. In another part of this work an expert will eloquently tell the nature and value of this revival that seemed willing to paralyse with the flowers of genius and poetry the arms of the fratricide wars. Alas! art was not so mighty! One of those who with greatest endeavour had striven to promote the literary movement, Gutierrez Estrada, a Yucatecan, head of the monarchist party in Mexico, as another Yucatecan, Zavala, had been of the radical party, then proposed, with a good faith and an honest valour never doubted by anybody, as remedy to our evils, the monarchy under a foreign prince; nothing could be more artificial, more facti-

tious, more impracticable in Mexico than a monarchy; nothing could fustigate more our national self-love than the monarchy of a foreigner. But in front of our incurable discords, in front of the tremendous North-American peril, the blunder can be understood... Gutierrez Estrada's pamphlet roused the indignation of the country, the spokesman of this indignation being a general, son of illustrious Morelos and then minister of Bustamante's who afterwards, in company with Gutierrez Estrada, banished ever since from his country, was to bring to the sacrificial altar the flower-crowned victim in whom Almonte contrived to personify his ambitions and rancours and the other his impossible dreams.

The government's impotency to organise something, to bring Yucatan to obedience, to gather an army capable to dictate in the territory of Texas a definitive pact of mutual respect to the United States, to make itself obeyed by its chief agents, actual sultanlets of the departments, was to be seen in bulk at the middle of the year 1841. On the other hand, firm in its purpose to protect industry and ever needing resources to secure some more life, government considerably overcharged the importation tariffs; hereupon, between Veracruz and Guadalajara, passing through Mexico, a constant coming and going of correspondences and agents of import firms (contrabandists with some honourable, as honourable as rare, exceptions) ensued attempting to remedy the evil; prudent people talked of manifestations addressed to government; the resolute spoke of the great national panacea, the pronunciamiento, the *revolution*, as a revolt always was called or what the mob designated by the most graphical name: *la bola* (the ball). The persons indicated to head the movement were Parades at Guadalajara, Valencia at Mexico and the indispensable Santa Anna at Veracruz where Bustamante, who in spite of all his defects, was a giant of honourableness, disinterestedness and patriotism at the side of his competitors, had allowed him to restore his satrapy of old. *La bola* was the solution; the government of Jalisco threw down the gantlet and modified the decree of general Congress; Parades with the garrison of Guadalajara sustained and widened the movement; soon after the Republic was in flames. Valencia and a good deal of the troops at Mexico seconded the Guadalajara scheme, Veracruz rose and Santa Anna, offering his mediation, stretched out his arms to embrace Bustamante and strangle him; the president refused the offer with haughtiness, although deeply disheartened: he wished to renounce office; the Senate encouraged and sustained him. When all the revolted forces had agglomerated at Tacubaya, the war minister Almonte planned a scheme he deemed admirable: a pronunciamiento of the executive power on behalf of Federacy. Bustamante was forced to accept this idea, the crowds at Mexico uproared, the classical chiefs of civic militia improvised battallions of workmen and Santa Anna got frantic; there were combats in the streets, one of them serious enough at the gates of the capital and at last, at the moment of the supreme battle, Bustamante gave up his sword and his staff, surrendered his army to Santa Anna and took once more the way to exile. He was not to return until the frightful disaster of 1847 in order to aid honestly at the reparation. It was a misfortune for Mexico Bustamante was not president during the American invasion; he, certainly, was no great general, but, under his auspices, the defence would have been more serious, far better organised, the triumph dearer and peace less humiliating. Let us consider him politically dead from this moment leaving for an inscription on his tomb the consideration just set forth.

The bases of the Tacubaya platform of the army are a most curious monument of the hypocritical diplomacy of pretorianism placed at the service of the exploiters of the public treasury, traders, agiotists and generals headed by an ambitious man who thought his Country was not his mother, but his concubine. The *revolution* was centralistic against centralism, under the pretext the government was bad and the constitution ought to be reformed; it was incumbent on the general in chief to nominate a committee composed of two deputies for each department because, the platform had it textually, there was no other manner known to *supply* the will of those departments; this committee nominated the provisory head of the executive who within a certain term ought to convoke a constituent congress and who was to be responsible to a constitutional congress. Meanwhile the provisory president was invested with *all the faculties necessary* to reorganise the administration, with *all the power necessary to do good and prevent evil*. This was the famous seventh basis; it was dictatorship.

There was an attempt at insurrection against all this; Bravo in the South, the federalists in Guadalajara and Durango, rose in arms; Santa Anna proved very clever; he was very astute. He nominated a ministry of federalists and reformists, who accepted office with the vague hope to steer that government towards their craving to put an end to the might of the clergy; Gomez Pedraza, Garcia, the constant and most integrous ex-governor of Zacatecas, took part therein and Santa Anna, partly by enticements and partly by gathering an army formidable for those times, succeeded in pacifying all; so it always happened with new situations; however, penury and misery soon rendered them old. Oh! the miseries of the times when Santa Anna governed, were famous, since he spent all on behoof of the army, of his favourites, in the royal pomp with which he surrounded himself! The end of the copper money circulation (one third of which at least was false) was a good measure; the unceremonious firmness with which he exacted from the clergy large sums and the cession of edifices, astonished people; the clergy grumbled, paid by little and little and pardoned the dictator for all. Who would not pardon him! Besides, the Mexican arms covered themselves with glory in the North crushing in New Mexico the filibuster invasions of the Texans; this showing the dictator his star was in a lucky mood, he made bold for all: selling by auction estates the clergy reclaimed as their property, permitting foreigners the acquisition of land, a just measure which naïve narrowmindedness had viewed as a terrible danger being quite the contrary. At the same time beautiful theatres for opera and comedy began constructing, the capital was embellished as far as was allowed by the walls of the fortress and prison at the same time, of the convents that cut off and intercepted the chief avenues and hindered in every direction the increase of the town which they gave a sinister medieval aspect when evening's dim penumbra set in.

Progressionist dictators when they are intelligent and honest managers of the public funds will be a great boon for countries which are forming, because they assure peace and guarantee work thus enabling people to gather forces. Such dictatorships may be theoretically detestable but theories belong to the history of political thought, not to political history that needs facts wherefrom to infer scientific generalisations. But when dictatorship weighs down justice, provokes disorder and renders peace a precarious state, then it is a calamity and such the Santa Anna dictatorship very soon became. The agiojobbers continued amassing for-

tunes, the favourites received splendid gifts; some got for their share a good deal of the wealth sequestered from the jesuits years ago; the clergy whined and commoved the crowds by their moanings; in front of the incessant exigencies of government the clergy had adopted the policy to yield as a matter of principles, to haggle in the particulars and to moan and whine proclaiming their ruin; thus they cleverly tried to prevent the great blow of *disen-
dowment* that seemed impendent. Taxes and loans were ever increasing; in the budget the country able to see (because the majority only was able to feel the whip and the levy) saw something astounding: an entry of receipts of twenty nine millions, only thirteen of which

were normal while sixteen derived from extraordinary and precarious resources; and their surprise rose to amazement when they became aware that expenditure had exceeded revenue, there remaining a *déficit*. It is true, the South was in revolt, it had been necessary to send an army to Yucatan that had separated from the Mexican nation and another had to be prepared to reconquer Texas; it is true that in those moments English and American envoys exacted in peremptory terms the payment of big sums, but all this derived from the same source: the utterly bad political management... That was not an honest dictatorship and could not but die.



John N. Almonte

The elections for the new constituent congress took place;

the urban population that, hungry, besieged the bakers' shops and at every moment threatened to plunder the corn stores, unable to know whether the admirably falsified copper-money they had in their hands was of some worth or not, took no part in the struggle as usual; the immense rural mass remained dumb in their ill dissimulated servitude; but in the electoral groups of the second degree made *a fortiori* in the municipalities, the reformist and federalist sentiment prevailed this being the bait with which the always alive local spirit was allured; neither the conservatives, little fond of exposing their commodity and the quiet of their families to political agitations, entered into the electoral contentions nor did in an active manner the agents of the most indolent government of Santa Anna, the dictator, who between one and another fit of febrile activity, returned to his life of pleasure, his fondness for cock-fights, for the luxury with which he surrounded himself thus insulting public mi-

sery, to his passion for exhibiting the uniforms of his brand new regiments. The result was favourable to the advanced parties that always contrived to triumph whenever there was an outline of elections. The president became aware of the fact when there was no more legal remedy at hand; but his pretorians having their cartouches full of extralegal remedies he contented himself with recommending not to make the constitution a federal one and then he returned to his cocks, his parades, his forced loans and his taxes; under his complaisant looks his lands in the State of Veracruz increased as by witch-craft and adulation, a cancerous abscess on all tyranny, reached the height to erect ridiculous statues in honour of the president and to dedicate a most sumptuous funny-funereal festival to the inhumation of the mummified leg of the supposed hero of Veracruz.

In our parliamentary history the Constituent Congress of the year 1842 occupies a preeminent place of civic honour. The representatives immediately tried to stop, by an *as far as here*, dictatorship and its checkless financial despotism; calling it to account and entering into an eager strife with the resisting Executive. Two constitution schemes were opposing each other: that of the moderates proposing an eminently liberal centralism combined with administrative autonomy of the departments,

this being the most reasonable and most patriotic on the eve of a great international war, and the scheme of the exaltados implying the return to pure federalism; both of them frightened government. In the discussions the reformists caused the debates to bear upon their favourite ideas aiming at the suppression of privileges, the nationalisation of the landed property of the Church, religious toleration, freedom of slaves by dint of the mere fact to set foot on national ground, an attitude of a supreme humanitarian valour in front of the brutal threats of the North-American slave-holders that in a certain manner initiated in Mexico the resolution of the great slavery problem in the United States. The vehement speeches against the privileged classes and the adoption of the federalist constitution scheme by Congress gave the president a motive to set up a conspiracy after his old custom presenting himself as a defender of social interests against the cruel and intolerant



Marianus Paredes and Arrillaga

demagogues of 1828 and 1833» as the minister of war, Tornel, said who had been one of them, perhaps the sole actually cruel one. The dictator repaired to his manor; this was the signal of Government conspiracy being ripe; general Bravo, always frightened by reforms because he did not think them corresponding to the wishes of the country, which was certain, as certain as they actually corresponded to the necessities of the country, lent his noble and majestic figure to decorate the plot; Tornel caused the manifestation to break out anywhere and the army rose throughout the country against the Constituent Congress. The ministers and provisory president Bravo, obeying *the national will*, dissolved the Constituent assembly that with an admirable integrity protested thereagainst amid the rebellious garrison of the capital; soon after a *committee of notables* met, composed of conservative landowners, clergymen, militarys and lawyers, to frame some sort of constitution; they made an antireformist constitution in as much as the *fueros* were maintained, but no antiliberal one, for it guaranteed the individual rights, the independency of the powers, the responsibility of office holders and rid their pretty mitigated centralism of the complex and useless mechanism of the Constitution of 1836. The new fundamental law was designated by the name of *Organic bases*. And so the middle of the year 1843 came on.

While the *instituent Committee* elaborated the new code, the president, always displaying his title of «well-deserving patriot» returned from his estate to the throne, not being obliged to submit to any other law than the famous seventh basis of the Tacubaya scheme that precisely disencumbered him of all subjection to law; he returned from his manor to busy himself in the three jobs that occupied all his political life: making war, extorting money and conspiring; Santa Anna when out of office, conspired against all government powers and when in office he conspired against his fellows; he was always conspiring. Every time when he came back from his rural seat, he brought a hundredfold appetite and every purse trembled, the clergy sobbed beforehand and the jobbers rejoiced; the situation was doubtlessly utterly difficult; every new phasis of the situation of the country was more difficult than the preceding, all being a uniformly accelerated accumulation of difficulties; we were descending an inclined plane; the abyss was below; war was going on at the river Bravo whose margins had been violated by the Texans rudely punished by Ampudia for their boldness; war continued in the South perpetually revolted and in the seceded department of Yucatan.

Santa Anna had to face this most grave military situation in the precise moment when the United States pressed him to fulfil the agreement pacted when the mixed reclamation commission had ended their transactions imposing on Mexico a peremptory obligation of two million pesos by decision of the Prussian minister at Washington who was the arbiter. Increase of the importation duties, formidable loans exacted from the clergy and private persons, the whole society surrendered to the despotic inquisition of the exactors who invaded all to lay embargo on all and to organise official plunder, universal affliction, such were the boons made to his country by the most unrestrained of dictators. He paid the United States a deal of the debt, concluded with Texas an armistice that ought to have been followed immediately by the acknowledgement of independence, an idea which Santa Anna, the former prisoner of Houston, furiously rebutted out of rancour and humiliated self-love.

Yucatán, as we stated above, had hardly formed part of New Spain; it was an excentric State whose centre of attraction could not be at Mexico with which communications were difficult and slow and there was no community of interests, so much so that when the Constituent Congress met in 1824, Yucatan pacted for herself an exceptional regime in customs. That territory belonged to the new fatherland in as much as this would favour the mercantile and industrial interests of the local fatherland, the latter always occupying the first place in the Yucatecans' hearts: later on there came reconciliation, solidarity, community of ideals, patriotism in one word, but this has been the result of our whole history, it was not the work of one day. Yucatan where the military element, dominant in the strong fortress Campeachy, could rule the whole State, maintained herself separate under the absurd pretext to be partisan of centralism being an *a fortiori* federalist entity; but this was the form of secession. Some good men strove to organise that inconceivable anomaly, among them a conspicuous mariner who had done remarkable services to the Republic and



Peter Ampudia

his native State, employing his fortune in the acclimation of a great industry in the peninsula; this man, all chivalrous and high minded, was Peter Sainz of Baranda.

However the revolution that overthrew Bustamante and restored Gomez Pedraza into power, put an end to Yucatecan centralism and the reform work was met with enthusiasm in the country of Moreno, of Zavala, of Quintana Roo. When Santa Anna weakened and undid federacy, the president's agents obliged Yucatan to remain addicted; but the illfated war with Texas and afterwards with France, brought the peninsula all sorts of vexations: high importation duties making bread dear for the Yucatecans, tolls wounding deeply their interior commerce, dispositions about maritime matters that were a terrible threat for the Campeachy marine, and more than all, the exaction of the blood contingent for the army,

this being utterly intolerable for the Yucatecans. The concert of wills became rapidly operated; the rebellion, several times vanquished at the beginning ended in triumph and Yucatan using its right remained segregated from the centralist Republic. A patriot of a high character, of great intelligence, of superior administrative qualities and of undiscussed probity, personified the movement and by the unanimous vote of his countrymen rose to govern the State: James Mendez and Ibarra (1). The governor contrived to fix the character of the facts: «temporary secession until the Republic returns to federacy.» The resolutions of Bustamante's government going so far as to place the Yucatecans out of international law, stimulated the party that longed for absolute and definitive separation of the State, but although enjoying greater popularity they did not attain a complete sanction of their votes.

Yucatan gave herself in 1841 a most free and reformist Constitution, greatly the work of Emmanuel Crescentius Rejon so well known afterwards throughout the country, hoping that after the fall of Bustamante justice would be done and reintegration into the nation might be possible. The heads of the secession were well aware this could only be a temporary one: the old rivalry ever reviving between Mérida and Campeachy, the ever disquieting attitude of the savage and cruel native population of the east and south of the peninsula, the scantiness of public revenue, were sufficient causes to produce in solitary Yucatan, at the reach of Spain and the United States and even of England incessantly gnawing her territory, a perpetual state of anarchy within and humiliation abroad. Reincorporation was necessary, but it ought to be effectuated in such conditions as to allow the State to *live* and all thought it could be done when Santa Anna came to power. But this was not so; after some useless attempts the dictator appealed to war that began in the second half of the year 1842 by sending to Yucatan a division of six thousand men and a flotilla; after a stubborn struggle during which the enthusiasm of the Yucatecans reached a feverish ardour begetting acts of heroism and dreadful popular crimes the war finished at the end of 1843 by capitulations of a part of Santa Anna's army, arrangements with the other part and absolute abandonment of the Mexican enterprise; later on a pact between the general and the local governments secured for Yucatan an exception regime within centralism.

Santa Anna as he was wont never accomplished the pactions nor did the exigencies of the merchants that domineered the governments of those precarious epochs allow those that succeeded Santa Anna's to remedy the evil; Yucatan seceded once more until in 1846 federacy became again the legal regime of the country. Sadder events were to follow.

The United States, ever since the first days of the Republic, had striven to acquire the zone comprised between Luisiana and the whole course of the Bravo from his source down to his mouth; Poinsett proposed to the Mexican government the sale thereof and the representatives of the *democratic* policy always supported by the Meridional States of the Union never lost sight of this acquisition either by good will or by force; there soon entered into those designs the acquisition of all the Mexican zone of the Pacific at the North of the tro-

(1) The present writer is a grandson to Mr. Mendez; this will not warrant his impartiality nor does he claim so much regarding a man for whom he professed, ever since his childhood, not only endearment but a devotion near to worship. However, others have written the history on trustworthy documents: they may be consulted.

pical line, in order to prevent, they said, another nation, England for instance, to take possession thereof; in sum, the doctrine was this: all the territory neighbouring the United States which Mexico is unable actually to govern, must be North-American.

The treaties, the practice, of International equity, the ill-dissembled apprehension of England and France regarding the territorial expansion of the Union, the opposition of the *whig* party which in the course of time was to get fused in the antislavery republican party under the direction of the great and conscientious orator whose name was Henry Clay, against the democratic party out of whose antiprotectionist and particularist doctrines there should arise through the slavery question, the separatist group and therewith civil war, had retarded the usurpation and conquest; however the force of circumstances rendered it more and more unavoidable.

Had not blind and improvident patriotism or rather the struggling factions in Mexico converted the Texas question into a political weapon to render each other unpopular by reviling one another as traitors, great evils might have been prevented just turning to account the exigencies of the North-American parties and taking for a starting point the incontrovertible right of Texas to separate, since the federal pact was broken. We should

have spared the zone between the rivers Nueces and Bravo, eventually California; we should have obtained a bigger indemnisation than of the treaty of 1848 and, above all, we should have shaken off the nightmare of a war with the United States that before breaking out, by the sole threat, had sucked to the blood the resources of our finance unable to get normalised.

It came not so; Santa Anna availed himself of the scare of a necessary war with Texas and a probable one with the United States in order to keep a spectre of a hungry and almost unarmed army stationed on the Bravo and to turn it to advantage incessantly requesting money which he incessantly squandered and to incite the constant craving of the *Republic of Texas* for annexation to the United States.



James Mendez and Ibarra

The conventions between that nation and Mexico in order to settle the reclamations, the perfectly argued notes by which Mexico showed the series of attempts permitted by the Washington government against the dignity of our Republic, since in several towns of the Union they proclaimed in public meetings the necessity of war with Mexico and the annexation of Texas, and a sort of armed emigration was organising towards that country, what all the talent of Webster was insufficient to justify or even to explain honestly, are facts showing that in matters of international law our diplomacy constantly defeated the American.

However, events pursued their course. After the barefaced aid to Texas, illicit aid as well considering that country as a rebel State as considering her an independent entity in war with a friendly nation, the question of annexation came to be formulated, which the Texans strictly might claim as their right, but not the North-Americans without previously delimiting the mutual duties between themselves and us. Calhoun, the rigid sustainer of the rights of the States against the federals, the Moses of the future separatist decalogue being a minister of president Tyler, arranged with the Texans a treaty of annexation which the Washington Senate did not approve and which instigated England and France, having acknowledged the independence of Texas, to offer us their mediation and prevent the attempt. Meanwhile Santa Anna prepared to continue war after the termination of the armistice, this giving rise to a fulminating note from the North-American plenipotentiary who with rude candour disclosed his government's conduct and declared the invasion of Texas would be war with his nation. Thus the Mexican Government was aware of it and had declared with anticipation that the admission of Texas into the Union would be answered by Mexico with a declaration of war. All was dependent on the presidential question in the United States; if Polk, the candidate of democrats and southerners with their platform of annexation were elected, fighting would be inevitable; if Clay triumphed, peace would be assured. The former triumphed by less than forty thousand votes of difference for a total number of two million six hundred thousand electors. It was our bad luck; however, one thing became apparent: annexation and war were not for the United States a *national* sake, but only a *southern* one.

While in the United States the great electoral battle was fought, here, too, the presidential question was agitating the minds; but here the comitia were the camps and the electoral urns were the cannons of civil war. There was a new constitution, a constitutional Congress, where, in spite of the endeavours of government, the federalist and reformist elements abounded to whom the unreservedly empowered president ought to render account; but this had no mind to give up dictature: Santa Anna converted his functions into properties; he deemed himself degraded admitting of responsibilities and like Scipio who when called to account asked people to give thanks in the Capitol, the president, in an equal case, recorded that he had founded the Republic at Veracruz and saved his Country at Tampico. Protest against this behaviour was unanimous; the man of the agio, of the loans, of the taxes and of the vexations inspired dislike and caused an immense fatigue; at Guadalajara, at Querétaro they asked for the fulfilment of the Tacubaya platform imposing on the president the obligation to render account of his management before the Congress that, as we stated, was striving to restrain the dictature.

General Paredes and Arrillaga, a man of personal probity and utter political improbity, live guarantee of the aspirations of the party that pretended the country to anchor on centralism and privileges while an alliance with some European nation would help us to get rid of the United States, even erecting here, in exchange, a throne for an exotic prince; general Paredes, a reserve card in the political play, that is to say in the incessantly renewed struggle for honours and emoluments, propped with a part of the army, at Guadalajara, the attitude of the local assembly, whilst the Chamber of deputies at Mexico manifestly sympathised with the movement. Santa Anna felt the peril and passing as he was wont from indolent sybaritism to feverish activity, gathered one or two divisions in the centre of the Republic, left to vice-president Canalizo, on whose grateful dog fealty he relied, the care to watch Congress that endeavoured to subdue government to law, and hurried through the Bajío against the focuses of the revolt to quench them either by dint of astuteness or by dint of force.

His misdoings in Querétaro provoked so resolute an opposition in a group of deputies that it imposed itself on the whole Chamber and under the direction of representative Llaca laid its hand on the bridle of dictatorship's wild charger, for all comprehended that the acute moment of the crisis was coming. Llaca, honour of the still shapeless parliamentary institution, honour of the Mexican tribune and of the conscience of a people rising aloft their tops in the first dawns of political liberty, embodied with heroic civism the immense protest of public indignation, despoliation and shame; the Chamber followed him; Government appealed to force and dissolved the Assembly that stoically and rigidly caught hold of their right; society seemed to hold back breath in front of the duel between speech and sword; events rushed on quick: Valencia, in the citadel, pronounced himself for Paredes's platform and in an explosion of ineffable enthusiasm the people, all the classes composing it, the magnate and the labourer, the clergyman and the civic guard, tributed the most spontaneous ovation ever beheld by the capital to the Assembly that with a manly and noble serenity resumed the course of their debates. The dictator had a still intact army; he marched upon the capital, he went to Puebla while the army of Paredes advanced and his own dissolved; then, a fugitive, he was made a prisoner and sent into exile. By dint of law being president of the Government Counsel and afterwards through election by the Chamber general Joseph J. Herrera took possession of the presidency and therewith the year 1844 ended.

Congress faced the American question that presented itself pressing, solemn and terrible, it was an iron clad hand compressing the neck of a weak and bloodless nation, a brutal knee on the belly, a mouth eager to bite, to tear and to devour while speaking of humanity, justice and right. The Government of upright, prudent and patriotic general Herrera counselled by Peña and Peña in whom science and conscience were united, made their utmost exertions: an army at the frontier, another marching to the frontier, an appeal for union in the name of the death-threatened fatherland, an admirable attitude of dignity and correctness before the North-Americans, but not hostile to an arrangement, a compromise, an agreement on the basis of the independence of Texas, such was the spectacle: the society that saw and thought, feverish, uneasy, exigent, incessantly moved by shudders of warlike rage, causing the government agents to hesitate, crying for vengeance and shunning sacrifice; money absconding, the soldiery smelling new revolts, the rural class inert, ignorant, without

affection for her extortioner master, without general spirit, without a fatherland, such was reality.

Herrera's administration had scarcely begun its functions, when the cause for war set down by our government came up; Congress and Executive at Washington carried and sanctioned the annexation of Texas. Our minister asked his passports and our relations with the United States were interrupted; territorial appetite, first form of the present imperialism having got developed in the South and West groups of the Union, the war with



José Mariano Salas

Mexico was desired there and accepted here by public opinion. The Mexican Government manoeuvred with cleverness admitting the good offices of the French minister to mediate with the Texans who had not yet accomplished all the terms of the annexation protocol; but it was too late, the Texan convention performed the act, the forces of the United States penetrated into Texas and with an utter contempt for international law they passed the Nueces, boundary of the new State of the Union and invaded the territory of the nation with which they were not yet in war, pretexting Texas had always claimed

the river Bravo to be their frontier. With our protests our best troops began their march; if they reached the frontier before the American chief Taylor had been reformed, we might successfully take the offensive.

Our government while declining to accept the American envoy with his official character, did not refuse to exchange ideas that might serve as a basis for an eventual future agreement; it was well known the accomplished fact of the annexation could not be remedied; it was history and must be the starting point to arrive at something that might save the remainder of our threatened territory. The pressure of opinion with its brute and passioned intervention frustrated the subtle compromises of diplomacy; here there ought to have been instead of a people diseased by imagination, hatred and misery a robust and self-possessed one able to let our ministers chip with chancellor notes the formidable peril

that was impendent on us; it had already been obtained that in order to give an official character to our conversations with the American plenipotentiary the squadron that threatened Veracruz was withdrawn... Then the general who with our best troops and our last supreme resources had been sent to repel the invasion, pretexting Herrera's government was treacherous to the Country, committed the impiety to turn against the heart of the Republic the point of the sword which the trustfulness of that Country had put into his hands and in union with Valencia, the best of Santa Anna's disciples who seconded the movement in the capital, overthrew Herrera in December 1845. The vanquished great citizen left office plainly as he had taken it, his soul full of patriotic anguish and his face clean of spots and shades.

The Government at Washington learning the fall of Herrera, reformed their squadrons; ordered Taylor to advance towards the Bravo where he was expected by our forces vainly looking out for aid from Paredes and after a new diplomatic trial of mere form, force began to speak. Meanwhile, the man who had become a culprit of the grossest political and military crime of that epoch, tried to organise an ambiguous administration behind which all people guessed a monarchic plot, and in order to sustain himself he kept his army together under his own hand instead of hurrying it towards the Bravo.

Paredes got himself nominated president with discretionary power by an assembly of persons nominated by himself; he, of course, immediately tried to convoke a Constituent body, because the centralist constitution proved to be unserviceable; the really useless things were that army converted into an instrument of cynical ambitions, were the timorous or fawning and egoist bourgeoisie, were that clergy considering themselves superior to their country and dedicating all their exertions to conserve their treasures, and if they could show men of the highest christian virtue it was as an antithesis to the ignorant, superstitious and corrupt crowd of monks; the only one that served was the people ragingly exploited by all.

A group ostensibly sympathetic to the new president was formed, directed with his habitual integrity and talent by Mr. Alaman, the monarchic group whose organ was *El Tiempo*



Saltillo. — Zaragoza's Park

(The Time). Those men, convinced doctrinaires, showed that the most vivacious elements of the conservative party tended to crystallise and take a regular shape, not more around the centralist idea that in their mind had proved inefficient all reform conations having found place therein, but around monarchy which they themselves had helped to kill in Iturbide, which revived by the valourous pamphlet of Gutierrez Estrada and which was to demonstrate, fifteen years later on, all its profoundly sterile, inapplicable and antipatriotic nature when it was realised with the aid of the first military nation in the world. The American danger was the begetter of the scheme of a *monarchy with a foreign prince*. What force was a foreign prince to bring to the Sisyphean work of the organisation of the country? What was he to be but a new perturbation agent added to the existing ones and more efficacious than none for discord and evil? If the prince came alone, what would his monarchy be? If he came with a foreign army, what would independence become? All this was a dream till the day it happened; then it proved a direful nightmare.

The convocation summons for the Constituent assembly is a singular document work of Mr. Alaman; it divided the electoral people greatly restrained, into classes fixing for each class a proportional representation; this was the second time the oligarchy endeavoured to give herself a constitutional form which theoretically might be more or less acceptable, but which for the majority of the political nation that by their purely verbal fondness for democratical ideas revealed the latin genesis of their spirit, was a manifest threat, was the constitution of an aristocracy preparatory of monarchy and so it actually was; it was the eternal assembly of notables by which all the military revolts endeavoured to sanction their triumphs and the ambition of their chieftains made permanent by the vote of the middle class. The protest was an imposing one; the press, soon persecuted and the most important men of the liberal party, soon gagged, imprisoned or banished, raised their voices and there was not one village in the Republic where there was no repercussion of the echo; government felt itself obliged ostensibly to declare its adhesion to the republican creed.

Meanwhile war was actually existing; notwithstanding hostilities had not yet begun. Paredes by dint of pecuniary morality and wishing to repair his irreparable fault, gathered resources and slowly sent reinforcements to the frontier; but the Mexican chiefs never contrived to considerably surpass in number the American forces to balance their superiority of armament over us. At the beginning of May, Arista, the Mexican general in chief, resolved to throw the invader from the territory of Tamaulipas into that of Texas obliging him to repass the Nueces. He crossed the Bravo with equal forces as the enemies and in two successive days engaged several combats that obliged him to retrocede defeated to Matamoros, to evacuate this place and to concentrate at Linares. The lack of a competent staff, Arista's inexperience and the North-American artillery brought about so great a disaster.

It is apparent there was a need, as in moments of supreme danger for the country, of a man or a group of men that would lay hold of the rudder of the sinking ship; it is apparent it could not be Paredes, a mock-general, it is apparent the pusillanimous burghers that formed the Congress were not the conventioners of the French revolution; the Consul and the Senate were wanting.

The North-American president, Polk, learning the news of the May combats, declared, with a cynicism almost unique in history, that war was a fact because the Mexicans had

invaded the territory of Texas and that it was necessary to pursue until peace was obtained; the Mexican Government made the formal declaration of war in June founding it on justice with so much moderation and good sense that there was not one honest conscience in the United States and in Europe unwilling to grant we were right.

In our country frightened by the news of our defeats a storm was raging. Revolution broke out at Guadalajara, this was a fated event, and Santa Anna was called, this was fatal too, he being the conspicuous man by excellence; whenever he parted people put a vague trust on him expecting him to do miracles; he was the man of the crises, he was our *deus ex machina*, he was a saviour who never saved any thing. What was to be done? Paredes wanted to reserve sufficient forces to combat revolution and wanted to send all of them to the North; with great difficulty he contrived to direct some ill equipped and ill armed troops towards San Luis Potosí; one of these brigades, on the point to start, pronounced for federacy and for Santa Anna; the government of Paredes, his Congress, his monarchists, disappeared as by spell; they never ought to make their appearance.



Querétaro. — Court in Government palace

The new military revolt came forward as a reaction against monarchism and in expectation of the arrival of Santa Anna who was aware of what was going on and at the first notice set off with general Almonte, then an ardent republican and with the eminent Yucatecan statesman Rojon, general Salas, the rebel of the Citadel, convoked a Congress and provisionally declared the Constitution of 1824 reenacted, suppressed inconsequence thereof the departamental assemblies and as a pledge of his adherency to pure federalism he placed at the head of the ministry the chief of the reformist party Valentín Gómez Farías.

Santa Anna arrived; the Americans, with profound machiavelism, let him pass like an

incendiary projectile thrown into the enemy's camp. The month of August of the year 1846 was going to end; what was the scope of this man in whom the popular masses insisted to see a Messiah in spite of having often vilipended him throwing down his statues and bemiring his trophies? What was the scope of that defrauder of all hopes, that defender of all the causes serving his avidity and his ambition, what did he bring that desperate situation, that army vanquished beforehand by indigency and hunger, without trust on their officers and without faith in their triumph? He brought an intention: that of being, in requital of all his faults, a soldier, nothing more than a soldier of his country. Unfortunately, this soldier was unable ever to become a general and he was going to be the generalissimo.

More than half a million pesos cash had been left by Paredes and when Santa Anna arrived this money had been spent already for which he must have been very sorry. But in those moments he only busied himself in agglomerating forces at San Luis Potosí to march with them to the relief of Monterrey; with three thousand men and equipment for eight days he set off, at last, not having been, up to then, more than the head of the revolution; he had not been anything else in all his life. He left Mexico surrendered to electoral agitation; the radical elements protected by the authorities, hindered as it seems the moderate part of society to intervene and *ad terrorem* made themselves masters of public vote; this being deplored even by the liberal papers; the hour of the men of action was come and the reform party was getting ready to strike a decisive blow at the clergy.

Santa Anna, having scarcely begun his march, learnt that Monterrey had capitulated and that Ampudia's division with military honours was concentrating at Saltillo. The accustomed improvidence in this new and bloody episode of the war; the soldiers had fought well, some officers had distinguished themselves heroically on one side and the other; the superiority of the enemy's staff and artillery had once more become manifest. So it would be until the end.

Santa Anna displayed an immense activity at San Luis; he incessantly asked for money and took it wherever, he found it at hand. With the troops he brought with him, the incessant *levies* made in the neighbouring districts, some contingents of the States and the remnants of the division of the North he contrived to gather from fifteen to twenty thousand men; as his army was increasing his exigencies gained gigantic proportions. Our ports being blockaded, most of the States paralysed, those of the North lost, Yucatan, threatened with a tremendous interior catastrophe and still almost a stranger to general patriotism always postponed to most pressing local patriotism, separating once more and proclaiming her neutrality in order not to fall into the power of the Americans, a *déficit* of seven or eight millions, the press clamouring against government for not knowing how to gather resources, the population of Mexico arming and forming militia battalions, some addicted to the reformers in office and others, the bourgeois ones, resolved to hinder the sacrilegious measures planned against the clergy that, more perhaps under the pressure of fear than of patriotism, alienated with sobbings small fractions of their fortune, such was the situation in its most apparent aspects.

Congress met; the majority although scanty was of the reformers; out of ninety deputies taking part in the deliberations, about a half showed themselves resolved to oppose the reformers' aims; all were liberals, however; amid the minority eminent orators were figu-

ring, such as Gomez Pedraza and Otero. In the last days of 1846 Santa Anna was nominated president and Gomez Farias vice-president, reappearing with them the duality of the ominous days for the clergy and the social mass that liberal or reactionary reputed the economical power of the Church as an untouchable institution.

Gomez Farias and the innovators had agreed a perfect accord with Santa Anna, the ardent Yucatecan reformer Rejon having served as an intermedium; the question was to dispose of the mortmain lands administered by the clergy in order to procure direct resources either by selling them up to the value of fifteen million dollars or by hypothecating them



Panorama of Guadalajara

(From a photograph by Belquet.)

as a security for a loan. This measure was an extremely grave one, nobody, however, doubted Government had a right to decree it; the royalty doctrine had no dissidents among the liberal party; briefly stated it was this: the clergy's estates were no private property, but corporative; they were therefore subjected to special conditions the State had a right to dictate; the clergy's estates were unsaleable (mortmain), they entered not into direct circulation; so they were in such economical conditions as the State might modify or transform on behalf of the community; the clergy's properties had been formed by donations made either by the sovereign or with his leave, all this being very revokable. Governments always had made use of this right; the Spanish monarchs always had upheld their prerogatives in this matter; when the very catholic king Charles III confiscated all the property of the Jesuits throughout his dominions, nobody denied his right, the execution thereof was discussed.

The reformers had a political aim, a social aim, a national aim; they considered the influence of the clergy pernicious because it maintained, as a right and almost as a duty, all the classes in the *statu quo* so favorable for the clergy's interests signifying religious superstition below and dread of any innovation above; the reformers being utter equalitarians were of opinion the ecclesiastical privileges constituted the main obstacle to the establishment of democracy and they thought that while clergy was a first rate financial power it would not be possible to deprive them of their privilege, of their *fueros*. This was the political aim. The social point of view proved identical with the economical one: as long as the big bulk of territorial wealth (the mortmains) would not enter into circulation, public fortune was unable to grow, the social group could not shift its luck; governments and particulars acted as parasites of the Church and all social progress proved impossible. And the national aim was financial, it was the life of the following day, it was the army organised and moving, it was the defence, it was the salvation of the country; the agio-jobbers did not lend, they waited till the exhausted exchequer needed one dollar in order to sell it for one hundred; the clergy only lent such quantities as hardly sufficed for the next day; the taxes, that on income and rental which had just been decreed, brought no revenue it being impossible under the present conditions of the country to carry out a systematical collection. It was necessary therefore to get with one blow all the money that would be needed during the whole year; there was no other treasury besides the ecclesiastical one.

In Congress the opposition was directed by the *moderates* whom it had become a custom to distinguish from the extreme liberals baptised with the names of the red or the uncompromising or the pure; the *pures* they were called by the people. The moderates were in accordance with the *pures* regarding the necessity to disendow the Church of its privileges and territorial wealth; but the former, the doctrinaire liberals, did not think disendowment feasible without an indemnisation and consequently without a compromise. To this the *pures* replied: Church will never consent but to consummate facts; it always has done so; and all, even those who did not deem an indemnisation necessary were of opinion this measure should be put off: at that moment it would be useless, nobody would purchase and besides it was eminently prejudicial because the reformist party was not strong enough to impose its will and civil war would come indefectibly. The reformists did think themselves able to achieve their purpose because they relied on Santa Anna; and they did believe they would obtain resources as they would begin by almost giving away the seized lands the clergy itself being likely to rescue them. So the decree was issued (January 1847), the ministers prepared to fight against the clericals; here and there protests began to be started in the form of pronunciamientos, some legislatures supported the law, others did not, refusing to promulgate it; the mobs instigated by monks of the meanest stuff pervaded the streets of the principal towns crying: «long live religion and down with the *pures*;» the alarm was frightful.

Nobody came forth to acquire what government was selling, the offer was far too precarious to elicit demand. And Santa Anna was asking, always asking; his exasperation caused by the attacks on him of the press censuring furiously the new law and on the other hand blamed the general in chief for his inactivity, was so great that he decided to go to encounter the American army crossing a dreadful desert, without tents and sufficient pro-

visions, without having made even rudimentary soldiers out of his men. With eighteen thousand men he passed through the endless halts in that land of desolation and thirst, on the road to Saltillo (February 1847) and when he came into contact with the enemy, he was overcome already having lost four thousand men in his twenty days' battle with the Desert. The enemy had chosen an excellent spot for defence (la Angostura) where he sustained two formidable assaults; if at the head of the Mexican army there had been a general and not an officer who, although very valorous, was very vain, unsteady and ignorant, the attack would have been concerted instead of being incoherent and planless and Taylor would have withdrawn to Saltillo. The Mexican soldier showed all his qualities in this terrible struggle; he was a soldier who fought without eating, who fighting forgot his weariness, who with the powder at the same time chewed enthusiasm and valour; but subjected to sudden depressions, as all illnourished, to panics, as all nervous people; and when he loses his trust in his officer or his chief, he goes away, deserts, remembers he has been sequestered by the levy and trained by the stick and he flees.

Santa Anna was like his soldiers; Santa Anna personified all the Mexican defects and some of the good qualities: the personal contempt of death. Depressed by the struggle he abandoned it before the supreme moment and retroceded into the desert where disease, nakedness, hunger and desertion fought the last combat with that bloodstained and famishing column defiling under an implacable sky, amid a perpetual cloud of dust burning and almost devouring it. Santa Anna fled from a probable victory towards a certain defeat. He fled towards Mexico where his power was in jeopardy and whither he had sent beforehand, a supreme irrisation, a bulletin of victory; certainly, he had not been vanquished by the enemy, he had vanquished himself.

That was precisely what Mexico was doing at those moments. At the end of February, in the very days when the national army failed at la Angostura, the situation that could not be worse, it seemed, had worsened: a new North American army had possessed itself of Tampico abandoned beforehand, and landed on the Veracruzian coasts; the penetration



General Scott

movement ceased going on through the North and began to be effectuated through the East while our army was striving in the desperate adventure we have just mentioned. Veracruz had but a handful of men to defend her; a new, a supreme, effort was needed in order to detain the enemy until yellow fever and an auxiliary army arrived. Government, still vainly endeavouring to carry out the disendowment decree, was living in perpetual alarm; the battallions where the individuals of the well-off classes were preponderant, were resolutely opposed to the reform; the clergy cherished them promising resources and when they received



Antony Leon, hero of Molino del Rey
(from the statue erected at Mexico in the Reforma avenue)

order to set off for Veracruz they concerted and disobeyed. The rebellion broke out in the form of a protest against the permanence in office of Gomez Farias and against the law of January and its legislators; afterwards all concentered in the first point. There were incessant struggles in the town, although very unbloody ones. The youngsters of the well-to-do class nicknamed *polkos* being preponderant in the rebel battallions, the faction was called with that name in opposition to the *puros*. Santa Anna, chosen arbiter between the contenders, arrived at Mexico, occupied the presidency of the Republic and furious on learning the capitulation of Veracruz, surrendered the rule to an interim president (general Anaya) having derogated the law cause of so many troubles and marched to cut the invaders the road to the capital beyond Jalapa on his own lands.

With his wont activity he soon succeeded in gathering an army at the mouth of the hot region; there he was the only one able to determine the spot of the action amid a many strategical points on those intricate grades of the ascent to the tableland; he chose the worst and got himself completely beaten. The same vain presumption, the same petulance of *jarocho* (Veracruzian churl) he had always displayed, ruined him there; his activity, his ardour, helped him to beget a new army in the very entrails of defeat. General Scott felt amazed when he knew it; he advanced towards the capital spreading everywhere conciliatory and soothing proclamations saying he being a republican made war against the monarchist faction and nobody would respect more than he the catholic religion and church. Nay, the monarchist faction headed by Paredes had not done more than render impossible the defence of the frontier; it was the liberal party together with a fraction of the military

party that directed and organised the defence of the country; the reactionary party figured therein by many of its conspicuous individuals, but not as a party. Scott feigned he was unaware thereof; the truth is it had been a disenchantment for the invaders to find themselves face to face with the federal reformists who, of course, had numerous contacts of ideas with the people of the United States, their admired model.

The invading army being master of Puebla, it was decided the capital of the Republic should be defended and they set about to organise the Federal District for the struggle.

Among thinking people there was little trust, none at all, may be; «the result was a sure one: it was impossible to annihilate the invading army incessantly able to increase by reinforcements from the East and from the North. And after all, what did it matter to lose lands that never had been ours but by name: Texas, California? It might happen to be a gain; to reduce meant to condense, meant to acquire greater cohesion, greater strength.» Common people did not think so; they believed the *yankees* were indefectibly to be vanquished; they never were afraid of the invader; the vague terror a succession of failures will strike the masses with, did not exist in this case: «it was not the *yankees* who had won, it was the Mexicans who had defeated themselves by their discords, their insubordinations, their follies; an effort, a bit of union and *that handful* of intruders would disappear.» So people was thinking with hatred and contempt; it was the incompatibility of races, customs, languages, religions, manifesting itself so in popular feeling. To acknowledge there was an admirable pluck and integrity in *that handful* of intruders who, reckoning on the superiority of their armament and cohesion over the inexpertness of the Mexican chiefs and on the weakening divisions of the civil struggles, penetrated overwhelming all on their passage up to the very heart of the country which, had it actually risen in arms, would hardly have left the dust of the invaders mingled with that of the profanated soil of the country; these undeniable verities would never be acknowledged.

Thus, when Scott's army made its appearance in the valley of Mexico, a shouting was to be heard, of people thinking triumph could not fail. There were the remainder of the heroes of la Angostura commanded by Valencia who already was *crowing* as a possible rival to Santa Anna, forming a division of veterans to whom the president delivered com-



Luke Balderns

moving addresses; there were the civic militia, the *polkos*, forming a picturesque encampment whither the most select society repaired in joyful pilgrimage and receiving, after the alarm discharge, at the presence of their mothers and brides, eucharistic communion, something like the supreme viaticum of fatherland and glory.

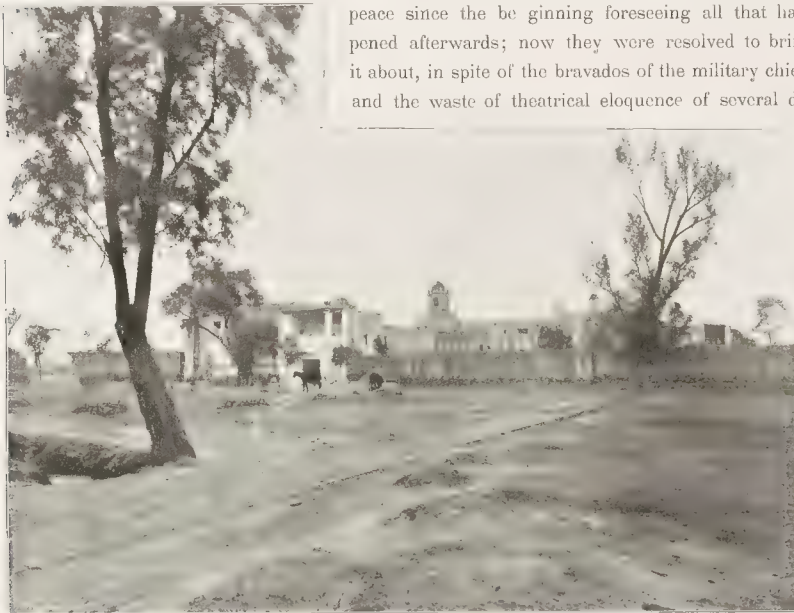
The invaders defiled undaunted and took their position on the lowest grades of the meridional range of the Valley; thence they could choose their road and their opportunity, nobody hindered them. The human centre of the defence was Valencia's division that went to place itself at the reach of the invaders in a bad position (Padierna). The general in chief ordered him to abandon it; the presumptuous subaltern shifted and disobeyed; Santa Anna who probably did not regret the loss of Valencia, did not insist on being obeyed and let him struggle first at his sight and succumb on the following day out of his view; by the defeat at Padierna the defence got utterly disorganised and the invaders would have penetrated into the town behind the fugitives who had communicated disorder to the whole army, had not the earnest defence of the bridge and convent of Churubusco heroically detained them and made them arrive ill-conditioned at one of the Southern guards that repelled them. The invading army did not amount to ten thousand combatants being opposed by an equal number, perhaps less, of the Mexican army that in the two terrible days of August lost five or six thousand men, the best undoubtedly. The tactical superiority of the North American officers was proved by the fact that in the whole campaign of the Valley they contrived to beat us in detail, always with superior forces; Padierna, Churubusco, Molino del Rey and Chapultepec are proofs of the truth of this assertion. Odd coincidents: Scott said in his despatches he had made prisoners two expresidents (Anaya and Salas); his surprise would have been great enough had he known that among the American officers there were two future presidents: Franklin Pierce and Ulysses Grant.

Scott solicited afterwards an armistice which was easily granted the purpose being to bring an envoy of the United States into contact with Mexican commissioners in order to put an end to what the American general justly called a *disnatured war*: the envoy, Mr. Trist, asked a band on our Northern frontier touching the Bravo and comprising New Mexico and the Californias; our commissioners refused to yield anything more than Texas as far as the Nueces and a part of Upper California; negotiations were interrupted, the armistice ended and in the first fortnight of September the fate of Mexico was resolved; the same impossibility, Santa Anna always found to concentrate the defence, left the defenders of Casa Mata and Molino del Rey in a minority of forces; owing to this absolute lack of sagacity the victorious defensive combat we there sustained could not be sustained offensively to convert the repulse of the invaders into a defeat; the same thing happened at Chapultepec, taken a few days afterwards. Among these bloody struggles an episode culminated: the defence made on the heights of Chapultepec by the pupils of the Military College; several of them succumbed. All the glories of the combatants, those of the invading army as well as of ours, remained below this simple and peerless act; it is the sublime vertex of the red pyramid.

On the 15th of September of the same year 1847 the conqueror army occupied the capital; here and there serious conations of popular resistance were to be seen, but they soon vanished; Santa Anna, undone, powerless, withdrew eastward, resigning the presidency of the Republic and nominating his substitutes until Congress would meet. A few days later,

the president of the Court of Justice, Peña and Peña, made himself acknowledged as legal president by a good deal of the country, gathered some elements of force, called the governors, tried to assemble Congress and contrived to constitute a national government capable to open negotiations with the head of the invading army. The special Histories tell abundant characteristic particulars we cannot even point out here. An extreme group of Congress was stubbornly opposed to the idea of peace whose live embodiment were president Peña and Peña, his minister De la Rosa and afterwards the interim president general Herrera; they

and nearly the whole moderate party had wished for peace since the beginning foreseeing all that happened afterwards; now they were resolved to bring it about, in spite of the bravados of the military chiefs and the waste of theatrical eloquence of several de-



Churubusco Convent (present state)

puties. Peace was a necessity before the annexation of Texas, it was an urging necessity immediately after: a salvation after war: war had disarmed us; we had neither soldiers (nine thousand men spread over the country) nor artillery nor rifles (less than 150 in the depots). Oh! it was very easy to deliver declamations and assume attitudes of majestic inflexibility on the tribune and in the press; they who were not afraid to sacrifice their popularity and their patriotic pangs to an indispensable and terrible work, were the well-deserved, are those who deserve History's deep respect. Only he who ignores the state of anarchy the country was in, the tendencies to dismemberment, already apparent in several States, the facility with which a great part of society accepted American tutelage being tired of disorder and ruin, the ideas of annexation arising in groups composed of enlightened people, the attitude of the indigenous easy to be exploited by the invaders; only he who ignores or forgets all this, can condemn the work of Peña and Peña and his eminent collaborators:

one combat more that would have been a new disaster and a new humiliation, and part of Chihuahua, Sonora and Coahuila would have been lost; the principle that in no case territory ought to be given up, is an absurd one and has never been sustainable by an invaded and vanquished nation; the true principle is this other: whenever there is an imperious necessity a nation can and must yield part of her land to save the rest.

With such convictions colloquies were begun and agreement clauses formulated by the American commissioner Trist, a man full of deference, and by the eminent juriconsults our attorneys; the latter being surprised to find the bases proposed by the conqueror had not been substantially changed after his decisive triumphs in the Valley; about them it was necessary to treat. Hence the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo: the conferences lasted precisely one month; the Mexican commissioners disputed the prey foot by foot, yielding only by force, while the national Government at Querétaro endeavoured to maintain itself struggling with anarchy, with the hostility of the principal States, with latent insurrection in others, with misery, with impotency; if it yielded, if it got undone, all would come to the ground and the Republic would sink therewith. At length the treaty was signed on the 2nd of February; we were losing what was actually lost: California, New Mexico, Texas and the Tamaulipecan zone beyond the Bravo; the remainder was rendered us in short terms and besides an indemnisation of fifteen million dollars. This was not the price for sold territory, that being impossible because the Americans were not left anything but what they already had; on the contrary they were made to render a good deal of what they thought they had definitively occupied; it was an indemnisation for war so necessary that without the same Government would not have been able to sustain itself and the chaos of dismemberment and annexation would have been the forcible consequence of the catastrophe. At the side of these clauses about the frontiers, the restitution and the indemnisation the others are of but secondary moment. It proved a painful agreement, not an ignominious one; the treaties of peace settled between France and Germany, at Francfort, and between Spain and the United States, at Paris, oblige us, by comparison, to be just in our judgment of this inevitable work of our fathers. They did what they were able to do, they did what they ought to do.

Mexico, a weak country, her population being scanty and disseminated, in part still exempt of cultured life and the full notion of fatherland, has been vanquished in her international struggles, though never dominated. There is however some sort of fatal element, of malign influence on her conquerors that seems to keep a strict although mysterious relation to the justice of her cause: out of the French intervention there arose the French-German war; from the American invasion there sprang the war of Secession; the parties suffered a dislocation in the United States, a resolutely antislavery group started the platform not to admit the black social plague into the new territories and in front of this group the South, feeling stronger, just to strengthen itself it had made the Mexican war, stood up threatening and armed. Clay the *pacifier*, the man to whose righteousness we must render homage, before leaving this tremendous period of our history, in the name of justice and right, Clay endeavoured to contain the torrent by a compromise; but the old pact of silence about the *slavery* question was broken and out of the friends of *free soil* the *Republican* party was to arise and by this grouping the South felt obliged to defend itself with the arms; the Mexican war was the school of the future generals of civil war.

VOL. I. — PART SECOND

Political history

Palace and wood of Chapultepec

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City of Guadalupe Hidalgo.—The Collegiate church

(From a photograph by Biquet.)

II

THE REFORM

CHAPTER FIRST

REORGANISATION AND REACTION

(1848-1857)

PACIFICATION; YUCATAN; ADMINISTRATIVE PROBITY. ARISTA'S PRESIDENCY;
GOVERNABLE LIBERALS. MERCANTILISM AND MILITARISM. SANTA ANNA; PERSONAL GOVERNMENT.
AYUTLA; END OF DICTATURE; THE REFORMERS. COMONFORT'S PRESIDENCY; FAILURE OF HIS POLICY.
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THEIR WORK. REBELLION AND FALL
OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT

MEXICO has had but two revolutions, that is to say, two violent accelerations of its evolution, of that internal movement brought about by the *medium*, the race and history and which impels a human group to perpetually realise an ideal, a state above that wherein it finds itself; a movement which by the shock of external causes almost always gets precipitated at the risk of determining formidable reactions; then, we repeat, it is a *revolution*.

The first was that of the *Independence*, the emancipation from the mother country, born by the conviction the creole group had arrived at of Spain's impotency to govern it and of its own capacity for self government; this first revolution was brought about by Napoleon's attempt to conquer the peninsula. The second revolution was the *Reform*, was the utter necessity to settle a political constitution, that is to say, a regime of freedom, founded on a social transformation, on the suppression of the privileged classes, on the equitable distribution of public wealth mostly immobilised, on the regeneration of labour, on the full creation of a national conscience by means of popular education; this second revolution was determined by the American invasion having shown the impotency of the privileged classes to save the Country and the inconsistency of an organism that hardly could be called a nation. In the main both revolutions are but two manifestations of the same social labour; to get emancipated from Spain was the first thing to be done; the second was to get emancipated from the colonial regime; two stages of the same work of creation of a national personality its own master.

Nowhere the action of government was to be felt somehow; every federal entity was its own master and the federal pact had become actually substituted by a sort of confederacy of insolvent republics. To constitute a centre, to reorganise a power capable to render the country its cohesion whereunto the conditions were far better after the war (the diminution of the territory in more than one third had rendered easier for the centre the task of strengthening its sphere of action), to make the best of the money got by the American indemnisation not only to go on living but to regenerate public finance, keystone of political stability, such were the most marked features of the mission incumbent on the man of progressionist ideas, of spotless probity and of an energy too much diluted by benevolence, whose name was general Herrera.

On June 12th, 1848, the capital of the Republic was abandoned by the invaders and occupied by the national government surrounded by the leaders of the governable liberal party, by those who were of opinion reforms ought to be slow and based on successive compromises in order to prevent civil war; the resistancees showed this plan to be unfulfillable. This government authorised to dispose of the first three millions of the indemnisation (its only resource nothing being produced by either the custom-houses whose scanty incomes were assigned to pay creditors, or the monopolies or the States never sending in their pecuniary contingents) distributed them the best way they could: the percussion gun having vanquished us, government provided our army with this weapon bying it from the invader; helped the Mexicans not choosing to continue living in the yielded territories to settle in their maimed motherland; saved finance from the impendent results of a ruinous contract and aided the Northern States and Yucatan in their struggles with the barbarians.

Yucatan which, in order to prevent the invasion and eventual definitive domination of the United States whose attack it was unable to resist, had renewed its segregation at the very moments foreign war penetrated into the Republic's heart, fearfully expiated this crime of high treason by the rebellion of the indigenes forming the majority of the peninsular population, rebellion long before prepared but which broke out as a consequence of the

civil war originated by the secession movement Mr. Mendez at first tried to contain and afterwards resignedly headed in order to prevent greater evils.

The insurrection of the natives socially undid the peninsula, overwhelmed all resistance, seized nearly all the chief towns, broke, plundered, burnt down, tortured, killed, incessantly, without any motion of weariness or piety. The Yucatecans that had not perished fled towards the coasts or emigrated from the peninsula; when the crisis was over, the population, formerly of about six hundred thousand inhabitants, did not amount to half that number. The inexpressible terror caused by those implacable murderers provided



Chapultepec. — Monument to the martyr boys

with arms by the merchants of the English colony of Belize was so great that the peninsulars sought help and protection in foreign countries determined to sacrifice even their precarious independence only to save their lives and homes. After some most doleful and useless attempts, Mexico, at the end of the war with the United States, readmitted that prodigal son and sent money and soldiers. Since that day Yucatan having allied with Mexico only by convenience, remained united to it by heart; it was not to federacy it returned but to the native country and for ever. Meanwhile all valid men in the peninsula had taken arms and by a struggle of years bestrewn with acts of savage energy and heroic episodes worthy of epical romances, the Yucatecans reconquered their native soil foot by foot; a zone of desolation and death, furrowed with frequent bloodlines, separated since then the civilised group living in ruined towns from the *kraals* of the indomitable and ferocious Mayas.

Albeit this was not the most harassing part of the pacification work; the barbarians in Yucatan were contained and by article 11 of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo the United States had contracted the *holy* (sic) obligation to hinder or punish the incursions of the Northern nomads; the barbarians who threatened government closely were the eternal fomenters of revolts and civil wars, were v. gr. Paredes, the Spanish guerrilla Jarauta, the revolts in the South and in the Querétaro sierra, where there appear now on one side now on the other the names of the future champions of reaction, the indefatigable and noble Thomas Mejia, the terribly sinister Leonard Marquez. In all this struggle government was receiving first rate services from general Bustamante who died soon after.

We cannot detail the history of any of these events. For pacification all was hindrance: the nearly absolute autonomy of the States, the impossibility of attending the army there being a total lack of resources. For administrative organisation all things proved impossibilities; the keystone was a reduction of the army, but this was equivalent to forming with the excluded another army opposed to government, the obligatory army of Santa Anna who whenever he vanished on the horizon of the Gulf regained his nimbus of a saviour. At the end of Mr. Herrera's administration the country was pacified as far as possible and material improvements were showing their redeemer heads. In spite of the terrible political discords literature and art made their divine voices heard, there was an unspeakable longing for going ahead towards a better future in order to conquer it, to seduce it; poor dear country, the shore was far away; between it and the century at its middle a whole generation was to shipwreck in a most violent storm.

The exhausted public finance, without any other effective resource but the indemnisation, had made a gigantic step, had got order to enter into the chaos; had classed its debts, converting the greater part thereof, that of the English bondholders; had definitively fixed their amount and stipulated the payment of lesser interests (an unimprovable operation under those circumstances, that does Mr. Payno's financial management great honour), a board of public credit had been formed composed of persons of high honorability; serious economies had been introduced into the budgets and a thing that seemed impossible, the War minister, general Arista, had succeeded in reducing, moralising and consolidating the army steering it towards the extinction of their particular not strictly military jurisdiction.

The conservative party existed in the form of dispersed elements serving sometimes one administration and sometimes another; the army followed Santa Anna who sometimes was a federalist and a pure, sometimes a centralist and a clerical; the clergy illruled by the bishops by and by was grouping definitively around those who resisting the new ideas, pretended the Church should rule society even by means of the government that ought to refuse religious toleration proposed by some and to hinder the circulation of forbidden books.

A man of great intelligence but politically starting from a fundamental error whose logical consequences were all the theories he with a juvenile impatience longed to carry into practice, began to give the conservative party a formal organisation; it was Luke Alaman. His unpopularity among the liberal middle class was formidable and even the masses were sharing it; his *History of Mexico* religiously consecrated to demolishing the respect for the fathers of Independence and the war waged in this sense against the legend into which popular gratitude had transformed as it is wont to do the history of the heroic insurrec-

tion days by the papers directed by Mr. Alaman, had converted him into an actual ensign of deadly fight against the reformist creed. The fundamental error of Mr. Alaman and all the party he organised during the moderate administrations, consisted in believing in the excellence of the colonial regime that had given the country peace, order and thrift; whence they inferred the necessity of restoring it and even of reinstalling monarchy under the protectorate or tutelage of a European monarchy, the Spanish before all. In the eyes of this inflexible doctrinarian there was no meaning in the terrible failure of the colonial regime demonstrated by the very explosion of the war for independence; he did not believe the wholly mechanical peace and order of the Spanish times had for their unavoidable consequence the agitation and anarchy of the Mexican times, precisely because of the absolute lack of preparation for self-government that characterised the Spanish education our mind was informed by; for him there was no matter in the variation of times, the absolute impossibility to reestablish the mental and physical isolation that was the essential condition of the old regime's success, and he imperturbably pursued his aim putting into mutual contact all the conservative classes, all men of importance inclining towards his views, the Church that with its new heads Mgrs. Garza at Mexico,



Lazarus de la Garza, archbishop of Mexico

Munguía at Michoacan, and afterwards Labastida at Puebla entered fully into the political battle, the army incessantly tending to revolt wherefore he initiated epistolary conferences with Santa Anna who from Turbaco followed the march of Mexican affairs, the rich, nearly all of them Spaniards, the industrials threatened by the reformers' liberal doctrines; few times in our country so much energy, so much endeavour, so much talent were put at the service of an impossible cause; Mexican people could not undo the life of a generation and replace themselves in the moment when Iturbide created the Empire and repeat the same march from abyss to abyss. The municipal questions in which Alaman had the law on his side contriving to form a town-council which authority hindered to move, served him to try the strength of his army and the struggle he undertook against the administration of the governable

liberals was tremendous and rash; rendering the moderates unpopular by causing them to fail and provoking a reaction against them, he rendered fatal the domination of the revolutionary reformers, the *puros*. If all the conservative forces had sided with the moderates, reform would have needed half a century's toil more.

When that man of Plutarchan modesty, integrity and serene conscience, the now quite forgotten Joseph Joachim Herrera yielded power to his War minister, Marianus Arista, nominated president by the majority of legislatures, he might say: *he who does what he can does what he ought*. However, very little could be done amid the disorganisation rendered endemic in the Republic by the foreign war, by an ill practised and ill organised federacy, by the elements of anarchy and resistances to every attempt at order among the groups of action and at reform among the groups of conservation. In spite of their holy duty to hinder the incursions of the barbarians on the North, the Americans, instead of hindering, perhaps instigated the tragical inroads of the Apaches and their congeners from Sonora to Tanaulipas, keeping paralised by terror the mercantile and agricultural movement in the zone comprised between the new boundaries and the Tropics; and in Yucatan war continued monotonous, tenacious and implacable devouring the life blood of the Yucatecan population owing to the constant help given the Mayas, in exchange for the facilities to extract woods out of the Mexican territory, by the government of Belize feeling sure our reclamations would be useless considering the impotency of our government to sustain them energetically.

Thus in January 1851 when general Arista began his presidential period that actually came to an end before the conclusion of the following year, the situation was more serious than ever. Many good things had been commenced; how were these initiatives to be carried through! The financial question difficult to resolve normally before resolving the economical problems of colonisation, of roads of communication and of mobilisation of the territorial wealth, admitted of no more palliatives: the resources got by the American indemnisation were nearly exhausted; the custom-house revenue absolutely wasted by contraband that had a store at Monterrey and was ostensibly practised at all the ports and frontiers; the budget economies inundated the principal towns with dismissed officers ready to appeal for pay and ascent to the next revolt as they had always done and crowded public offices with traitors and street conspirers, very obstinate, very implacable, who undermined all and dissolved all: this was the terrible conspiracy, impalpable or irrepressible, of unpaid or illpaid functionaries; an eternal conspiracy at Mexico and which almost always was successful.

Everything was attended to by the new government: it helped the frontier States: it reinforced the custom-house guards to prevent contraband in the North; it repressed revolutionary movements, some of them rather grave ones (Guanajuato), and above all it created resources; this was the supreme difficulty. The ministers of finance valorously displayed the situation of the treasury; the president, in his periodical informations addressed to the Chambers, traced fearful pictures of our misery. It was apparent that in spite of the economies made in the pays of the office-holders, in spite of the defence of our Northern boundary remaining unattended, so that it might be considered as lost (Sonora, Durango, Chihuahua), the deficiency including all our obligations, exceeded thirteen millions; putting

aside most of them it still nearly reached five millions and the day after the conversion, there was nothing left to pay the interests of what was called *the English debt*; the last attempt at a consolidation of our credit fell shamefully to the ground. Diplomatic exactions obliged us to find provisory expedients in order to detain a probable foreign war and momentarily silence our creditors; some ministers proposed as a unique remedy suspension of payment, others recommended to make the revenues of the States enter the federal coffers and all of them wished the taxes increased: augmentation of the importation duties, taxes on the manufactured produce, etc. The clearest part of our scanty resources lay in the customs revenue, but we already stated, contraband almost nullified it and when the measures taken by government succeeded in restraining this traffic, the Mexican filibusters (Carbajal and Canales) followed by the Texan filibusters, ostensibly organised on the other side of the Bravo and, supported by the commerce of Matamoros and the frontier custom-houses, invaded, at the head of small armies, the national territory, threatened Matamoros, Camargo, promoted the secession of those districts wishing to form a separate republic; the exhausted government, by an utter effort, contrived to repel the invasion that went to gather anew on the American side in the sight of the authorities that armed the filibuster expeditions on the Bravo in the same way they armed and pushed the barbarians of the Northwestern frontier and the piratical expeditions of Walker and Raousset who craving to be the Ferdinand Cortés of Sonora, succeeded in possessing himself of Hermosillo in 1852 for a short time, returning afterwards to his preparations for conquest, to his dreams of adventurer poet, to his insatiable ambitions, like those of his ancestors, the feudal barons of the times of the Crusades.

An event whose momentousness could not be calculated forthwith came to pass like an advertisement of the beginning of the disaster; the superior officer governing Matamoros, in order to gather resources that might enable him to repel the filibusters, had altered *motu proprio* the customs tariff lowering the importation duties. The case gave rise to fulminating interpellations to the ministers, to desperate reclamations of the importation commerce (chiefly that of Tampico and Veracruz), to passionate accusations and to hot debates; the evil was difficult to be remedied. Congress attended not or very little the financial initiatives of government hardly able to try to quell the incessant revolts at Veracruz, Sinaloa, Michoacan; the country was dissolving, as the War minister Robles Pezuela ventured to state.

Under such sad auspices the year 1852 began with a new Congress, but with a worse situation, traced by the president in dark outlines in a speech that seemed the *De profundis* of the federacy and of the Republic. As was quite natural he asked resources to fill up the formidable deficit, he demanded dispositions to oblige the States to fulfil their duties quite forgotten by them, he required troops to consolidate the most precarious work of pacification of the country and pointed out the interests of manufacture and commerce ought to be conciliated. Congress would or could not do anything. The new and frightful inroads of the barbarians into Durango caused the unlucky inhabitants of the frontier to exclaim: «Our last hour is come; we are going to vanish from Mexican society!» Neither Congress nor Government were able to do anything.

So month after month passed by, all things repeating, barbarians, filibusters, revolts,

infinite scarcities; a federacy converted into a confederation through the excessive liberty of the States; the Executive soliciting from Congress that arranged nothing the faculty to arrange something, the petition proving unsuccessful; the sound part of the country applauding the first telegraphs, supporting the literary publications; the opposition press wounding governmental persons even in their private life and the conservatives heaping sarcasms on federacy, representative government and republican constitution; such was the state of things. Whatever happened, seemed to prove they were right; the Reform work hardly became apparent here and there, choked by urging necessities; Ocampo in Michoacan undertook



Guadalajara. — Episcopal palace

it with energy, supporting religious liberty, attacking parochial obventions and preparing bold systems of nationalisation of inalienable property, this being, Mr. Alanian said, one of the most efficient causes of the fall of Arista and deciding clergy to instigate revolution. The president, however, firmly pursued his way bestrewn with obstacles, unwilling to deviate a sole line from his constitutional duty.

At the middle of 1852 a revolution broke out at Guadalajara against the righteous and progressionist governor Lopez Portillo, honour of the Jalisco bar; the revolts, master of the capital, soon invaded the whole State; whilst the federal Executive made ready to combat the insurrection, the representatives of all the enemies of the situation gathered at Guadalajara, the focus of the revolt and there they strove to turn it against general government. The santannists coaxing the covetousness and resentment of the army were the most active

of these evil agents and succeeded in September in converting the local rebellion into a general one demanding Arista's deposition; at last, in October, all that heterogeneous conflux of appetites, hungry and exasperate cravings and reactionary instincts, all those who were afraid of the reforms (the clergy moved by Alaman's agent Antony Haro) and those who wanted to avenge something, those who wished to rob something, those who desired to eat something and those fond of *la bola* and of the indispensable thaumaturgus of Turbaco, came to an agreement and hence the *plan del Hospicio* arose (October 1852) maintaining the federal system, disowning Arista, appealing to a new Congress that ought to reform the Constitution and save the country and calling general Santa Anna in an encomiastic manner. The movement spread everywhere; general Uraga nominated at first to combat it and afterwards revoked from commandship, put himself at the head of the new liberator army; meanwhile, Tampico had made a *customs pronunciamiento* reducing the tariffs and taking the life from Veracruz which revolted likewise establishing the same tariff combination.

This was a mortal blow for Arista's government hampered by the haggling way Congress granted its faculties. Many, the addicted fraction of the military element and the politicians of action, pushed the president to dissolve Parliament; he never agreed thereto. In January 1853 he made an attempt to obtain new and efficacious faculties; his endeavours proving useless he nobly and stoically tendered his resignation and left office. Thus this man who had penetrated into history through the obscure, slippery and ambiguous by-path of military riots came out upright, with a lofty and clean forehead, under the triumphal arch of duty fulfilled.



Michael Lerdo de Tejada

The magistrate presiding over the Supreme Court of Justice of the Federacy, on whom in virtue of the law it was incumbent to act as president of the Republic, was a righteous judge, an accomplished jurisprudent, at an age of vigour (little more than forty years), of a bilious temper and an energetic character. Mr. Ceballos assumed the presidency in

order to facilitate Congress the nomination of a provisory president and this nomination fell on him. Thus invested with a provisional power that might be considered indefinite he tried to settle the problem of the situation with clearness. The revolution had contrived to master the most active element of the country and Arista's resignation had given it an additional strength; nothing could withstand it, its triumph was certain. So the question was of a compromise in order to pacify the country and to prevent bloodshedding in the first place and in the second to hinder the presidency of general Santa Anna towards whom the whole movement was already gravitating and for whom Ceballos like all governable liberals felt a sort of horror, quite justifiable, to be sure.

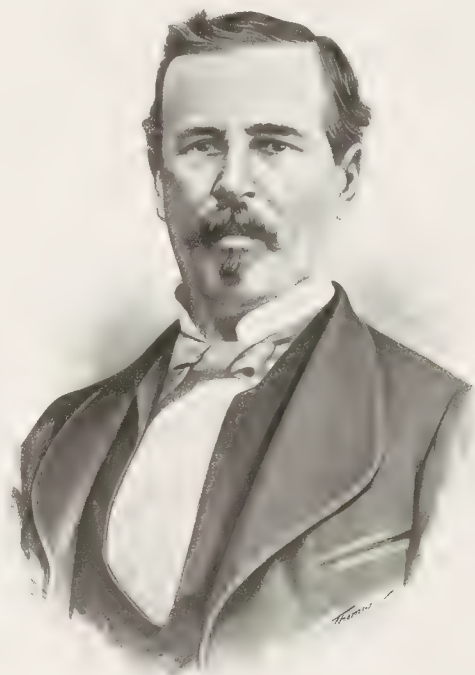
On the fragment of army he had in his power and which could give him some respectability and authority to impose the compromise, he scarcely could rely, chiefly on account of the immense unpopularity of Congress. This body having precipitated the fall of Arista most foolishly as though it were an accomplice in the Santannist reaction, was hateful to many liberals for that fact and for being thought incapable to find a remedy for the financial situation: it had discredited the parliamentary system and the conservatives profited of this in order to demolish the institutions.

Ceballos deemed the suppression of this hindrance necessary and invited Congress to suicide issuing the convocation summons for a Convention that was to be the very formula of the compromise with triumphant revolution and wherefrom anything might come but a presidency of Santa Anna; an army might call that man, a Congress never.

When the representatives became aware of the initiatives of the president, they quite stunned made ready to succumb fulfilling their duty and directly assumed an august attitude. They answered the presidential endeavour by summoning the president himself before the Great National Jury; then Mr. Ceballos had the Chambers dissolved; the deputies and senators protested and tried to continue meeting until they were obliged by police to disperse amid public indifference or hissing. But by his wholly illegal act Mr. Ceballos had torn his titles, he was no more a constitutional president and when the garrison of Mexico pronounced itself on his behalf he was but one more revolutionist. He was not long in becoming aware thereof his moral force being lost; the head of the government forces (Robles Pezuela) joined Uruga the head of the revolution and both invited Ceballos to cover with his provisional authority an arrangement creating a dictatorship for one year as a preface to the Convention and intrusting Santa Anna therewith. Ceballos surrendered government to some general and returned to his Court of Justice; his attempt had failed: in order to succeed a perfect accord would have been needed with Congress, this granting him all the necessary faculties and leaving him full liberty of action. It could not be so and the complete disaster of the government of the *moderates* arriving thereby at the revolutionary form, left the field free for the struggle between the extreme elements; the crisis could not end but by a dreadful civil war: this was fatal. The moderates were men for normal times and Ceballos himself, by his sensible and just settlement of the Tehuantepec question indefinitely removing the American peril from the Isthmus, showed how good a ruler he would have been in an epoch of stability and order.

The United States pushing the barbarians and filibusters over the whole northwestern

boundary, arming swarms of contrabandists or allowing them to arm themselves on the Bravo, had been the primordial cause of the ruin of federalism disabling the central government to enjoin the States within the limits of the Constitution and creating the tariff questions in the ports, unsettling all and converting the merchants into riotbrokers and arbiters of the situation. While swarms of commercial agents went and came from Tampico to the frontier and from Veracruz to Mexico and Guadalajara to foster the movement of Jalisco, commissioners were sent to the *proscribed* to solicit his favour. The proscribed arrived; he had not forgotten anything nor had he learnt anything: his same ineptitudes, his same boastful patriotism, his same vanity, his same instinctive scheme of government that consisted in converting the Republic into barracks, in forming the Mexicans into a regiment and in plundering the coffer of the Body: that was what he brought from exile. Accepting he only could govern without a constitution, he availed himself of those who, since they did not mind their constitutionalist creed becoming the criers of dictature, ceased to be conservatives being actual revolutionists and reactionaries. Alaman had formulated the creed of the new party of amalgam of the rich, the clergy and the army. In a very firm letter not containing a single flattering word (on the contrary) he rather dictated with integrity than explained to Santa Anna the sole conditions under which the reactionary



Felix Zuloaga

party would consent in governing with him: the Jalisco revolution became general owing to the exertions of the clergy «frightened by Ocampo's reform attempts» Alaman said; «we are therefore in the case to propose an agreement: 1st, absolute religious intolerance, religion being the only link uniting the Mexicans; neither inquisition nor persecutions, but war against impious works; 2nd, a strong government, but subjected to certain principles and certain responsibilities; 3^d, complete abolition of the federal system and of every thing called popular election (we already saw how Alaman understood the electoral question in the famous convocation of the times of Paredes); 4th, organisation of a competent army according to the needs of the country; 5th, no Congress; Santa Anna well counselled will supply all Constitution.» Alaman was the head of the cabinet; Lares, Haro y Tamariz,

Diez de Bonilla and Tornel, were his fellow ministers; the bloom of the counter-reform. Alaman in his letter to Santa Anna had not told all his thought; but the dictator knew it and agreed therein; it was this: to conjure the more and more evident American peril it would be necessary to establish in Mexico a Spanish protectorate and the monarchy of a Bourbon (it was a sure means to precipitate the American peril). The Mexican envoy, Hidalgo, began to give the thought a shape in a series of conferences with the head of the Spanish government; the fall of that personage's ministry and the death of Alaman put all the plan off, Santa Anna being very glad of it.

The reactionary government complicated by that of Santa Anna's exclusively militarist camarilla published for all statute a sort of a very laconical administrative regulation and began its work. Away with enemies!: they began banishing Arista and after him all men of importance of the liberal party; away with censors!: the law of Lares rendered impossible not only the freedom but the very existence of the press; away with obstacles!: they distributed the departments among military men, changed the territorial division and constituted every governor, every prefect, every town-council into a direct agent of the central power, sole elector and distributor of functions, sole collector of funds; that was not a central power, it was a *unique* one in all the strength of the word.

But as it always happened, the government, incessantly increasing the army (cancer of the centralist governments) and wasting in parades, processions and military festivals, the dictator's delight, the net proceeds of public revenue, found itself taken aback by the financial question, the dead stand of all the Mexican governments. Haro who was the minister of Finance, a most honest, most fanatical, most eccentric man, had frightened the agiojobbers, had undertaken bold economies and a truceless struggle against the dictator's squanderings; at last he proposed a loan to be made hypothecating all the clergy's properties; then Santa Anna who could not put up with this caused him to resign. With Alaman's death and Haro's resignation the government of the reactionary party ceased; many reactionists remain in office to serve government out of hatred against federalism, but they keep in the second row, at the rear of the military men who are the masters of the house.

Alaman, as most latin politicians, was admirably practical in his censures against the regime he detested, but exclusively theoretical and lacking a deep sense of reality in the practice of affairs. He organised the conservative party as a group for combat, uncompromising with the reform ideas and with North-American influence in Mexico and pulled the Church after him. His first work was a capital blunder: that of combating relentlessly the moderate liberals whom he ought to have supported by all means, had he really known his country; his second work was an immense fault: that of complicating the clergy with Santannism and dictature. Instead of strengthening it he exposed it to all political jeopardies and authorised the utter retaliation, disendowment. Moreover he left his party as an inheritance the hope for a foreign intervention and a monarchy, that is to say, eternal death.

The work of the revolution soon proved compassless; the great reactionary politician's idea to render the dictator's tyranny impossible by dint of good counsels, was a dream; personal government was founded and the tyrant received from the army placed on the political stage a thousand titles, even that of emperor; Santa Anna was content with that of most Serene Highness and all the pomp and splendour incessantly displayed, the resurrection of

monarchical creations (the Guadalupe order) and of all the attire, regulations and gorgeous apparel of the royal times showed the dictator's passion to imitate the second Napoleon (Napoleon III) as Iturbide had pretended to parody the first: the crown was not far off; they were driving towards it by means of the most minute despotism, the most cynical squandering, the most shameless favoritism, the drawing rooms, the orgies and the balls. Never had the soldiers shown so costly and picturesque regimentals, the churches so tempting ornaments, the ladies so splendid jewels; never had the Republic stood with her feet more stuck fast in the mud of misery, ignorance and vice, never had it shown a more pageant crest.

The old creole oligarchy that thus abdicated into the hands of the despot, made easy with a certain sureness of the roads, with the hope to draw a good premium in the *agio* lottery, with their terror for the reformers. He who was to formulate the reformist scheme by and by, was an officer who heedless of the political situation presided over a certain ascensional movement towards material improvements: telegraphic lines carried out, railway lines projected, the creation of statistics, useful publications: his name was Michael Lerdo de Tejada.



John Baptist Ceballos

In March 1854 an obscure military chief proclaimed at Ayutla, in the department of Guerrero which since some months disquieted government by the attitude of generals Alvarez and Moreno and colonel Comonfort, a platform seconded by these chiefs who contrived to become masters of Acapulco. The platform was reduced to drive Santa Anna out of office, to protest respect for the personal guarantees, for the army and for commerce. Not one word of federalism or reforms; on the contrary, a centralist tendency seemed to prevail: a general in chief who when the majority of the country would have accepted the platform, should summon a small assembly of department representatives named by himself which should elect a provisional president with omnipotent faculties, and convoke at a peremptory term a Congress intrusted to constitute the nation under a republican, representative and popular form; such was the scheme.

Government had occupied beforehand some important spots in the South, and when

it learnt the news of the rebellion, invaded the district from several parts with great activity; soon after, the president himself went to lead the campaign admirably narrated in his (inedited) memoirs by general Sosthenes Rocha then official in the sapper battalion; it proved a colossal failure: the troops of the line opened their path to Acapulco amid the scarcely disciplined bands of Alvarez; at Acapulco they were unable to conquer general Comonfort's nobly obstinate resistance and returned to their starting point; the revolution however for a long time remained confined to the South (Guerrero and Michoacan). While Comonfort eclipsed going to the United States in search of arms of which there was an almost complete lack among the insurgents, the dictator endeavoured by means of terror to hinder the fire to spread: the terrible law against conspirers having no other penalty than death was frequently applied: prison, banishment and confinement continued being every-day occurrences; superciliousness, superbness and wastefulness were the only rules of government. And no outlet was apparent from this situation; flattering raised to a foolish degree, a sort of incessant deification of His Highness, the laughable apotheosis of the hero of Tampico, being materialised on his onomastic festivals to such a degree that the processions of his portrait or in his honour eclipsed the popular festival of Corpus Christi, seemed to indicate that the providential man, first in war and first in peace, as he was styled by the only papers that bought their right to live with an unbounded adulation, would perpetuate his rule.

At the middle of the year 1854 Raousset-Boulbon deeming the moment propitious to realise his dreams of conquest and riches, because Sonora was believed to be an unexplored California a hundred fold richer than this, put himself at the head of a group of Frenchmen and Germans introduced beforehand as colonists and pretended to possess himself of Guaymas; after a bloody affray he was captured with the surviving part of companions; general Yañez who had directed the defence of the town with superior integrity, pardoned the adventurers, but saw himself obliged to order the execution of their leader who by his valour, his gallant appearance and his chivalrous manners won the sympathy and pity of all; he died with the serenity and devotion of a paladin. Being a man of extraordinary imagination and energy he wanted to make his life a novel and succeeded therein; nor did it lack an epilogue both tragic and heroic.

Santa Anna, with a rather senile and torpid envy, court-martialled for all reward general Yañez received with acclamations throughout the country; he tolerated nothing, he isolated himself; only his *camarilla* enjoyed his intimacies and his endless gratuities. Two righteous magistrates of Supreme Court of Justice, Ceballos and Castañeda, having refused the Guadalupe decoration, were deposed and the former took the road of exile whence he never returned. Thus the immovableness of the judicial power was destroyed, the only safeguard of the independence of the magistracy that was the sole possible check on despotism.

By the return of Comonfort the revolution won new vigour and the victories of the government with their unfailing epilogues of military executions began to be counterbalanced by those of the revolution frequently marked by Comonfort's acts of generosity. The country began to heed this leader: the revolution having presented itself with an analogous platform as former revolts not meaning anything for sensible people, the revolutionary army being composed of guerrillas accustomed to all sorts of misdoings and the dictature heaping victims on victims and thus rousing everywhere an infinite craving for vengeance reflected

in the clandestine publications of the revolutionaries or in those printed abroad, people were afraid the horrors of tyranny would be followed by an attempt to imitate the years of terror of the French revolution only explained there under the threat of disappearance of the nation attacked by the whole of Europe. So it happened that the frequently efficacious exertions of Comonfort to humanise civil war and to organise the unformed hosts of the revolution were looked on with deep sympathy that on the day after the victory became manifest as an immense popularity.

Santa Anna, in order to gather resources, was obliged to assent to sell a fraction of the national territory modifying thereby the boundaries fixed by the treaty of Guadalupe and making us lose a portion of land (the valley of Mesilla) actually occupied by the Americans who also got the obligation suppressed they had contracted (but never fulfilled) to hinder the barbarous tribes to make inroads into our territory. Carrying the ostentation of power so far as to bargain a part of the national territory appeared an exampleless monstrosity, it being clear that if in anything the nation ought to have taken part it was in this affair whose only aim was to procure the Treasury seven millions instantaneously devoured by war and *agio*. But in order to show the nation supported his despotism, his ministry, imitating what Napoleon III had recently done in France, invented a *plebiscite* roughly disposed to give the dictator and dietature a number of apparent votes.

Notwithstanding, that man was uneasy; his instinct of an old revolutionist made him understand the rising was gaining the will of the nation horribly wearied of the struggle and anxious to obtain guarantees and peace. The dictator made a new journey to the South and another to Michoacan, always amid noiseful ovations and triumphal processions: but everybody observed things remained in the same state; the revolution spread from Michoacan to Jalisco, Colima fell into the hands of Comonfort who had contrived to capture one of the best brigades of the army and to secure the adhesion of its leader (general Zuloaga), and Vidaurri laid hold of Monterrey and proclaimed the autonomy of an important portion of the frontier.

Something must needs be done to give an apparent satisfaction to public feeling; so the dictator took it into his head to consult persons of conservative opinions (although keeping aloof from politics) and doubtless enlightenment, about the manner to transform personal rule into national government. The eminent jurisconsult Couto penned his opinion condemning with peremptory reasons all attempt at monarchy and marking as a main object for a future constitution an efficient and practical guarantee of the civil rights. Couto, the head of the ecclesiastical chapter Moreno y Jove, and other distinguished men of their height, marked the line where governable liberals and conservatives met in common hatred of tyranny and of monarchy. This group was entirely distinct from that led by Alaman which was utterly reactionary; this was truly conservative and as necessary a party as the reformist in the normal course of the liberal institutions.

Santa Anna did not mind the project; when at the middle of 1855 he learnt there were risings in the State of Veracruz, he was afraid the revolution might cut off his retreat, he fled from Mexico, abandoned his ministers who absconded and after issuing a manifest wherein he extolled his own conduct and overwhelmed with all sorts of abuse the authors of the *infamous revolution* of Ayutla he embarked for foreign countries.

Quite a period of our history disappeared with him, not without leaving long and bloody tracks like the red reflections of crepuscule. The history daughter of the militarisation of the country through the war for independence and of the endless anarchy we were doomed to suffer by our education, unhealthy but fatal manifestations of our activity personified in Santa Anna, was going to end, the tragedy lost its protagonist. Slowly, but resolutely and definitively, another historical period, another generation, another Republic were going to appear on the stage.

That situation might have fallen into a still deeper abyss; at Mexico, amid furious



James Vidaurri

mob riots the garrison pronounced for the Ayutla platform, its head convoked an assembly after his shape and that named a provisional president: the men of order frightened by the triumph of the revolutionists, and the heroes of the following day, expert in the art of withholding for their own profit the consequences of the political crises, pretended thus by juggler's tricks to convert the revolution into an intrigue; Haro y Tamariz succeeded in bringing over to his side the State of San Luis and the excellent troops stationed there, and afterward Doblado at Guajuato; Vidaurri followed his own mind; the army of H. S. H. defeated without being vanquished was on the point to prolong resistance under officials of iron

like Osollos, Marquez and Aljovin: all was soothed by the loud honest voice of Comonfort; the army submitted, the most honourable general Carrera, president of the capital, resigned; Haro and Doblado came to an agreement with the author of the Ayutla rebellion; an assembly met at Cuernavaca, the provisional presidency being intrusted to general Alvarez, the veteran soldier of Morelos and Guerrero who, by dint of astuteness and prestige amid the rugged mountain ranges of the South, had contrived to create for himself a vast patriarchal caziqueship that nobody dared to touch.

Alvarez, leaving to Comonfort as minister of war and generalissimo all affairs regarding the army, put government into the hands of the reformers: Ocampo in Foreign affairs, Juarez in Justice, Prieto in Finance. Comonfort wanted to conserve the army reforming it, the bulk of the reformist party wished to suppress it supplying it by the national guard;

the minister of War sustained his purposes and contrived to neutralise the resistances and therefore the army having reached the acme of its preponderance with the dictatorship and beholding the reformists with a profound hostility, considered Comonfort their ark of salvation. The reformers undertook their work by degrees, but with entireness and resolution: they suppressed the ecclesiastical fueros in civil matters and excluded all clergymen from electoral vote. The bishops protested; it was too late: they had created their own situation; not only had they always resisted all attempts at reforms, ever since that party defined its platform with Zavala, Gomez Farias and Dr. Mora, what they had a perfect right to do, but, in order to combat the timid reform conations of the moderates they had ostensibly enlisted on a political side and taken part in the struggle with their social influence, their ecclesiastical arms and their money. During the dictatorship for which the thoughtful men among the clergy had no affection, the most dauntless among the heads of the Church had done their best to recover their supremacy of the colonial times and that was the very negation of intellectual progress unconceivable without the liberty to believe and to think; the liberties civilisation has gradually made necessary and which are the perpetually ac-



Emmanuel Doblado

tualising ideals of select humanity cannot be conceived without what is called freedom of conscience, as the planetary system cannot be imagined without the sun.

Thus there was no shift, the battle was to be fought; the counter-revolutionists were going to make their last effort in the civil struggle; they ostensibly prepared for it. Ah! if they contrived to entangle in their exertions some great latin nation! Spain, a hope; France, a dream!...

Comonfort was a man of an upright mind and of a big heart; he forefelt the sea of blood coming on and tried to spare his country that immense disaster: not to defraud the revolution, not to provoke civil war, that was all his endeavour. With this purpose in his mind he accepted from general Alvarez the presidency of the Republic in December 1855.

The first chapter of the crisis of which the Ayutla rising was the preface and whose

antecedents ran mingled with all our history, was terrible, it was the presidency of Comonfort. Every thing was grave; abroad, that is to say, in Europe (the United States gauging our exertion more justly respected us somewhat more), England, whom we owed more and paid less because our resources hardly sufficed for the daily bread, that is to say, to half pay the faithful army and to pay the functionaries when it was possible, England was beholding us with disdain, now and then showed us her teeth and heedless of justice urged some exaction we must obey; France, with certain mildness and certain sympathy and certain incurable ineptitude for clear observation on the part of her diplomatic envoys and certain protectorial loftiness, seemed looking for or expecting something here; Spain motherly pretended to reduce us to the state of a diplomatic dependency of hers and although her plenipotentiaries at Mexico, soon linked with our society, generally were extremely deferential, their government was imperious, protectorial and harsh in their exactions to fulfil more or less unjust conventions or to punish crimes committed on Spaniards by exceptional procedures. All this tended to consolidate the absolute diplomatic tutelage palliated by the state of perpetual anarchy we were living in; we had three boots not exactly on our neck, but on our body. Within, there was a perpetual effervescence; since the reformist platform began to be evolved, there was no day without a pronunciamiento, without a sedition, without a riot, without a revolt somewhere in the Republic; it was a perpetual trepidation movement; there seemed to be an eruption increasingly preparing underneath; the political situation concealed a crater. When Comonfort ascended to presidency, the pacification work was so very complicated and difficult that it needed something like heroism to undertake the enterprise. Doblado and Uruga maintained the rebellion in the Bajío tract; Lozada, a cazique in the pay of wholesale contrabandists, was master of the Nayarit region; Tepic and San Blas being doomed to be his tributaries, and Vidaurri continued dominating a large sector of our frontier. Doblado submitted, Uruga was subdued; in the course of time, Vidaurri felt obliged to compromise with government placing himself at its disposal; he passed for the sword of the radical party.

But where the army threatened in its privileges contrived to constitute a dangerous centre of action was in Puebla; around a warlike priest a first nucleus formed at Zacapoaxtla; all the Santannist officials had their place of rendezvous there; there the fugitive Antony Haro repaired being a sort of candidate for presidency of the conservatives; the troops sent by government passed over; the best general at its disposal, Del Castillo, betraying Comonfort, joined with all his forces the pronounced who thus became able to possess themselves of Puebla. There they remained expecting to be joined by the remnant of the old army, that which began being the *triguarent*, the privileged army that, so to say, had come along begetting itself, that through all the pronunciamientos and revolts had come down from 1821 to 1847 when its first generation became extinct, a new one beginning that was to conclude in 1869 yielding the place to the national army. But they waited in vain. The Constituent body having met already gave a legal soul to the up to then revolutionary situation and at the call of Comonfort resources were improvised and civic legions sprang up. With the brilliant permanent nucleus mainly composed of the brigade of Zuloaga personally addicted to Comonfort, the national guard acquired consistency and fought perfectly. Against the scarcely four thousand men of the reaction the president sent about fifteen thousand

who after the bloody encountre at Ocotlan obliged them to shut themselves up in Puebla where at the end of a severe siege all surrendered and were punished with a sort of military degradation: a humiliation that did not render them harmless, on the contrary, implacably disposed to seek vengeance.

Although Comonfort had an eminently conciliatory programme and nourished the hope to get *the Reform* slowly swallowed by the country, the reactionaries rendered the task impossible. To give truth the honour, the secular clergy (the regular one, with some marked exceptions, sympathised with civil war) kept appearances quite well and the bishops were anxious not to foster either armed protests or war. Among them the bishop of Puebla whose diocese was the centre of all conations of rebellion excelled by his nice personal qualities, his talent and tact. When the soldiers carrying the standard of war for religion (religion and fueros) took Puebla, the bishop declared himself neutral and yielded to their exactions giving them resources because they were the *fact* organised in form of military government: Bp. Labastida, being a man of an ardent and combatant temperament but high understanding, was aware it would be imprudent to bind the luck of the Church more than ever threatened by the reformist plans to the success of a military uproar, and the true conveniency of the clergy was to



Lewis Osollos

support the weak, bounteous and timid statesman that occupied the presidency; but after the military revolt having cost so much blood Comonfort saw himself obliged to side with the reformists, trying however to neutralise as far as possible the severeness of the great measures it was necessary to dictate. The properties of the bishopric of Puebla were sequestered in order to satisfy with their sale the expenses of war against which the bishop issued protest after protest.

The ministers bustled defending with ecclesiastical authorities the lawfulness of their procedure; the bishop refuted them victoriously. So things were looked at in that time; we see them under a different angle: the reason whereon government leant and whereby it was justified was an eminently political, not a juridical, one; its foundations were not in the canons nor in the codes: they were in the necessity for the State to live. The sayings

of the bishop of Puebla who indignantly rejected the reproach of complicity with the fomenters of the military revolt and probably spoke the truth, showed in an irrefutable manner that, in his eyes, there was a dualism in the social constitution that ought to transcend into the law. The bishop of Puebla said he had recognised the government or military rule established by the rebellion in Puebla as a matter-of fact government and had been obliged to obey the exactions of that government regarding resources. That is to say the Church at Puebla declared herself neutral between the belligerents because she considered herself an institution that, in virtue of its very constitution, stood even in purely temporal matters (nothing can be more temporal than landed property) beyond the reach of the authority of the State; this, if it wanted to be obeyed in matters touching the temporal estate of the Church, must come to an agreement with the king of the ecclesiastical society, the theocrat at Rome. This doctrine was perfectly adjusted to the teachings of the Church and the theologians of president Comonfort pitifully wasted their time bringing out with this motive the regalist doctrines. The question was, we repeat, that of a dualism, of the perpetuity of an excentric ecclesiastical State coexistent with the political State that for its part tended with an irresistible propension towards unity. This was the supreme reason of all the *Reform* did and the irrefutable basis of the right to meddle with the properties of the Puebla diocese; and as the bishop with ardent zeal (it was his duty and his right) tried to defend the fueros of the Church and as it was necessary to unhead the formidable resistance the clergy was organising against the reformist essays, government obliged him to leave the country. Since then the bishop thought himself authorised to procure from abroad the conclusion of that state of things and to seek the radical remedy for the evils of the Church in the complete transformation of the political regime of his country; his zeal and his perspicacity were not equal.

A short time after the triumphal regress of Comonfort to Mexico and the popular festivals organised to celebrate the advent of peace, at that hour that was one of so many parenthesis of artificial light in the night, the most difficult situation of government took another aspect.

Congress, nearly always dominated by the influence of the radical reformists, proved completely refractory to the conciliatory policy of the president that was like that fabulous lance that cured the wounds it caused and made the great wholesale punishments be followed by partial pardons and amnesties. Comonfort, in spite of the recent bloody experience desisted not from his endeavour to favour the old army by attracting the reactionary group by dint of lenity, toleration and promises almost always recompensed with perfidies, disdains and rebellions. Comonfort's behaviour regarding colonel Osollos, a man of great value and remarkable prestige among his comrades was typical; always struggling, always conspiring at home or abroad, Osollos incessantly vanquished and restored and perpetually in the breach, was obliged to shun the offerings and promises of the government pursuing the young officer in rebellion, in defeat, abroad, with offers and presents nobly refused. The more and more pronounced dissidence between the Constituent body and the head of the Executive ceased fortunately whenever government applied for support in order to quell a rebellion or to face a crisis.

Government deemed necessary energetically to show it was not dependent on the dema-

gogic majority (as the conservatives said and the ministers thought) and promulgated *motu proprio* a sort of provisional constitution calling it *Statute* which being the work chiefly of Lafragua, Yañez and Payno, organised the dictatorship offspring of the Ayutla platform, settled serious guarantees, restrained the discretionary power of the president who in no case was allowed to impose capital punishment, created an exceptional state for the clergy within citizenship (prohibition to vote and to be voted) and set the measure of the plan of reforms the moderate party thought possible to realise considering the state of the country. Vidaurri, in full rebellion, protested against the Statute that maintained the life of the Federation in suspension and Congress manifested being displeased and continued revising the acts of Santa Anna's administration.

Notwithstanding, the Executive pretended to prove it understood the duty to procure the radical but not anti-religious reforms longed for by the pure party and under the auspices of the secretary of Finance, Michael Lerdo de Tejada, the indefatigable progressionist and irrefutable economist, the law of disendowment of corporations was issued and the ecclesiastical corporations and their accessories owning the largest part of the real wealth of the Republic, the Church raised an energetic and unanimous protest. Nevertheless, it had been known long ago that measure would be dic-



Lewis de la Rosa

tated and Lerdo took care not to insert one sole political conception into the considerations of his bill (afterwards carried by Congress); all his reasonings were of an economical and financial purport: to mobilise the territorial wealth, to alleviate the state of the treasury by the duties that would be paid on the manifold operations to which this mobilisation would give rise, such was the plan in its form; in reality it was a gigantic social revolution, of infinitely slower effects than its authors expected, but certain as all radical changes of the form of property. The value of ecclesiastical property was not diminished; certainly, the property passed into the hands of the adjudicataries, tenants or not, but these continued acknowledging the Church the amount of the property thus transformed; if at the head of the Mexican Church there had stood in those moments a great statesman and not an honest and excellent, but timid and utterly routinist, priest (archbishop Garza) and if Saint Peter's

chair had not been occupied by a holy and inflexible apostle, but by a politician at the height of Leo XIII, the Church would have accepted the Lerdo law and got into her coffers a considerable quantity of hypothecary documents, that would have acquired a triple value nobody refusing to negotiate them; with that circulating wealth employed in big material enterprises such as the construction of railways (so the bishop of Puebla ventured to propose) civil war would have been prevented and the progress of the country would have made the fortune of the Church.

The episcopate blindly protested and war was definitively declared between the laical and the ecclesiastical states. This was fatal; it was, we already stated, the consequence of all our history. The clergy armed with its immense privileges and riches, in the colonial times was no danger for the unity of the State by which, in virtue of the patronage, it was held in tutelage and exploited; when a fraction of that clergy, the Company of Jesus, appeared aspiring to share the dominion of the State, it was implacably exterminated by the monarch. Independence being settled and the patronage nearly nullified, the clergy found itself emancipated, its own master and undermining the unity, that is to say, the existence of the State; this reacted in order to live and hence the *reform*. A religious war was dawning, a new period of blood and tears.

Everybody saw this; Congress deeming, and perhaps it was quite right, struggle would come with or without measures of clemency, continued its work striking hard blows at the clergy; revising Santa Anna's decrees they found that which restored the Jesuits and they nullified it obliging the fathers to leave the country, a step much bewailed by the catholic majority of society; clever pedagogues by their ability in studying inclinations and turning them to profit, admirable in bending characters and making discipline a religion, capable to obtain, by dint of artifice, a portentous sum of learning and scholarship from middling capacities, the fathers of the Company are the educators less accordant with the precepts of true pedagogical art all based on the conquest of freedom and increase of responsibility. In Mexico there were a few of them and quite harmless ones, in those days; the radical party struck in them the semi-legendary history of their quarrel with modern society and their theocratic doctrines.

The intense emotion produced by these measures was growing and multiplying while the Constitution scheme was becoming known, commented and passionately discussed by the press in every social sphere. The events at Jalisco that threatened to break the federal links that existed as a matter of fact in spite of dictatorship; the reclamations of Spain against the decision of government to introduce innovations into the treaty of 1853 that had produced deplorable financial results because when our debt was liquidated for conversion some doubtful credits had been introduced, were black times at the horizon of the course the Constituent body was steering in a direction the Executive was unwilling to follow. The Executive through the mouth of its conspicuous minister Lewis de la Rosa expressed its disconformity with the Constitution project, because it contained unacceptable innovations like that regarding religious freedom, and impolitic ones as those tending to handcuff the Executive and to suppress the independence of the judicial power by substituting immobility with election.

There was a parenthesis of calmness after the tempest in the second third of the year

1856; owing to the intervention of Michael de los Santos Alvarez, a well known in this country and highly sympathetic literary man, the envoy of Spain, a provisory arrangement perfectly equitable in the bottom was settled about the conversion; Jalisco remained quiet, Vidaurri must submit at last, and the extraordinary excitement caused by the paragraph relating to toleration of worships which roused Mexican society pushed by the clergy to address most vehement supplications to Congress, had decreased after the suppression of that paragraph and the protestations of ardent catholicism made on the tribune of the Chamber by most of the reformist leaders.

All was rapid; Congress after celebrating their peace with the president, became anew distrustful; it was clearly to be seen, the leader needed by the reformist party, was not Comonfort who was no moderator but a moderate, incapable to realise the supreme measures claimed by the situation, through the practical means not always taken into account by the constituents; he was a man who out of every radical determination deduced a series of consequences destined to reduce it to a minimum; such was the result of his irresolute character, his benevolent temper, his unsoaring intelligence.

At the end of 1856 conspiracies were boiling everywhere; religious struggle was general although latent, consciences were divided in the homes; a new civil war and treasury would shipwreck beyond salvation and government with it. Civil war broke out at Puebla; the same officers that had started the revolt at the beginning of the year, brought about the second; Comonfort recovered once more his extraordinary activity; battalions after battalions marched to Puebla, staining it anew with blood and at last the rebellion capitulated: one of the two leaders was shot, the other absconded, it was Michael Miramon. The reactionary focus of Puebla had scarcely been choked in blood, other officers, another portion of the pronunciamiento army, rebelled at San Luis Potosí; another long, expensive and bloody campaign stirred the Bajío region where submitted Vidaurri fought on the side of government. New urgent cares came to complicate all: we had just settled with England, not without some humiliation an affair regarding the consul of Tepic, head of a firm pointed out by public opinion as the main organiser of contraband and fraud on the Pacific coasts, the treacherous murder committed by a band of outlaws such as abound in countries where anarchism is rife, on Spanish subjects, produced a new sample of the arrogance of our diplomatic guardians; but the exigencies of the Spanish government presided over by Narvaez and representing there also an anti-reform reaction, were so unusual that they must be rejected and the Spanish plenipotentiary broke off his relations with our government, preparations for war beginning ostensibly at Havannah. France and England offered their mediation; some time later on, empress Eugenia said to the Mexican diplomatic, the exasperate reactionary Hidalgo, at Biarritz: «it would be convenient to raise a throne in Mexico;» within this phrase of that indiscrete lady there was in germ the intervention and Maximilian, the Cerro de las Campanas and Sedan; for her interlocutors the sweet voice of the Spanish lady was the voice of heaven. At the same time the debate about the Constitution was closed, there resounded in the ears of Mexican catholic society the infallible voice of the Pope condemning all the reformist work and the Constitution about to be promulgated, being, Pius IX said, an insult to religion; raising his pontifical voice with apostolic freedom in full Consistory he condemned, reproved, declared null and invalid the laws and the Cons-

titution and fulminated his wrath against those who had obeyed government; not one light of hope, not one word of peace, not one hint of compromise with what was irreparable: nothing but the inflexible right of the Church claiming her properties and her privileges; and the right of God, was it not concord, was it not love? Never, not even when she denied us the right of being independent, had the Church caused to resound in our country a harsher voice, a voice more pregnant with dole and death.

The Constitution was promulgated amidst an inexpressible political effervescence; it was solemnly sworn by the patriarch of *Reform*, Gomez Farias, and all the deputies, then



Clement Jesus de Munguia

the president of the Republic and afterwards the administrative and political country. The episcopate faithful to Pius IX's precept fulminated excommunications and exacted retractions from the swearers. That was the absolute anarchy of the consciences; attacks on the Constitution sprang furiously up from all sides and the eloquence of the eminent literate Joseph Joachim Pesado and the dry and precise dialectics of bishop Munguia raised terrible polemics; all knew, besides, that the president himself thought that fundamental Code was impracticable. The reformist party saw with bitterness civil war was coming and surmised with terror the

president himself might head it; in order to prevent that unattonable disaster, they invited the counter-revolutionist party to struggle in the comitia and to form a majority in the first constitutional Congress; this invitation, that, considering the complicity of Comonfort, would have been most efficacious for the enemies of the new law, was disdained; for them, war was the only solution. Then as a pledge of conciliation the constitutionalist group decided to elect Comonfort president, but even this did not disarm the reactionists.

Comonfort ceased to be the discretionary president created by the revolution of Ayutla and when the new Congress met in September 1857 began his constitutional period. The situation of the country was really fearful; nothing would resettle; consciences, homes, hamlets, villages and towns, all were deeply stirred. Like the immense clouds of dust that in our districts announce the impending tempests, so there was no manor, nor village nor town, that was not threatened by the guerrilla, by the pronunciamiento, by the highwayman, by the indigenous lord rising with the red banner of agrarian communism: religion and

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fueros or constitution and reform were the opposed terms in which the word *death* was decomposed. The exactor, the adjudicataires in no scanty number (several strangers and clergymen figured in the majority of those who had turned disendowment to profit) represented government; it was also represented by the *levy* quenching hearths, dissolving families, exterminating labour, mowing in bloom the Mexican generations delivering them to *marihuana*, to alcohol, to the hospital and to death. Unlucky country ours; it has suffered much, it deserves much.

The president, absolutely unable to govern with a constitution restraining the Executive on all sides, with no faith in the law he had sworn eager to yield and compromise with the reformist idea in order to calm social anxiety, with no trust on the army, without a dollar in the public coffers, deemed necessary to out off that situation all at once and go back in one hour the ground got over, placing the Republic in the same state it was on the day following the triumph of the Ayutla revolution; and from this enormous blunder there arose the most suggestive case of political suicide ever recorded in the Mexican annals.

Legally the Congress ensuing from the triumph of the Ayutla revolution, was the nation's official representation; the reality was another: the rural nation did not vote, the urban and industrial one obeyed the hints of their foremen or abstained, and the conservative party also took no part in the elections; the new assembly represented in reality but a minority, not only of the citizens capable of taking an interest in political affairs, but of public opinion; the opinion of the thinking group was divided among the moderates, the military and the clergy; the new generations were, in general, passionate reformers and as they with the veterans of pure federalism formed the most active part of society, it was this that made the Congress: a few moderates, partisans of a restoration of the 1824 Constitution; a group of radical reformers amid which there were floating some fragments of the great federal vessel shipwrecked in 1834 and 1853,



Empress Eugenia

and an oscillating majority generally voting with the exaltados, but never denying government their votes in difficult cases, such were the elements that composed the constituent Assembly: they were very young. It was a selection like all great revolutionary assemblies, it was a minority, like all reformist assemblies, it was a gathering of confessors of the new faith, like all councils called to define dogmas, if they be ecclesiastical ones, or ideals if they be laical ones; they came not out of the people's conscience; the people's conscience, when it began to get formed, slowly went towards them.

Their work was not impracticable, it was no sheer theory; it certainly started from the metaphysical conception of absolute rights. «Man by his nature is free, nature has made all men equal» were the *dogmas* as they said, because they constituted the bases of a social religion; they were the articles of faith formulated by conspicuous philosophers of the century that preceded the French revolution and explained with great eloquence by J. J. Rousseau, author of the revolutionary Gospel. Those maxims were not certain; man is not free in nature, but submitted to the infinite complexity of fatal laws; nature knows no equality; inequality is its perennial manifestation, diversity is its norm, the supreme force that sums up and unifies exists but in the incognoscible; with the name of God it was invoked by the constituent assembly at the beginning of their work.

Freedom, suppression of all privileged groups and identity of rights before the ballot box, which is democracy, which is equality, are not the work of nature, they are conquests of man, they are human civilisation; they derive from our faculty to intervene by means of our will in the evolution of the social phenomena being a component element thereof; they are no dogmas, they are no principles, they are no natural rights, they are aims, they are ideals which the select part of humanity contrives to actualise while modifying the social state which is the work of nature and history. No people, how superior soever its culture may be, has realised them fully; all, on different grades of the ladder, go on rising towards them embodying them by and by in their manner of existence. Did the Constituent body achieve a vain enterprise settling the individual rights? Certainly not, and for the following reasons: firstly, those rights constituted our ticket of citizenship in the group of civilised peoples; secondly, even though they were but simple ideas not corresponding to social facts, ideas are forces that modify and shape facts; cleverness consists in placing one's self precisely in the ascension line of a people and instil into its mind the consciousness of the ideal it must needs realise. Besides, those ideals, by their character, by their loftiness, by the longing they kindled in the minds, by the exertion they imposed to be attained, composed I cannot tell what a mysterious, religious, divine whole, contrived with an admirable instinct to place in front of one religious banner another, in front of one holy dogma another equally holy, in front of one faith the new faith, in front of the necessity of the souls to seek heaven guided by the light of the Church, the necessity of the people to realise progress and to conquer the future. The rights of man, taken from other constitutions, the American insufficiently known, from our own federalist or centralist constitutions that always had endeavoured to hinder the governments to shift into despotism by the frail barrier of the constitutional guarantees, had never been defined with so much accuracy and amplitude. But in order to render them practical it was necessary to render them relative, making every right dependent on a condition which in reality constituted its *guarantee*, that

is to say, the equation between social duty and individual right. The right to live, formulated in absolute terms, was submitted to temporal conditions; the social duty of justice (because the Constitution acknowledges society to be a live entity capable of rights and duties) was minutely defined in the articles that as well in the indicted as in the culprit, protected man, essentially free according to theory; unconditional freedom was allotted to the slave refuged on our territory, this declaration being the purest tradition of our history, emanated from the very moment our emancipation began and which in face of slave holding United States and Cuba, was serenely heroic. Every man is free, such was the formula; nobody can oblige him to do anything he has not consented, free to such an extent that he cannot even alienate his freedom; nobody but society can oblige him to respect alien individual or social right. The Constitution, after stating this general theory, enumerated the chief manifestations of freedom (to teach, to work, to emit ideas, to print them, to petition, to associate, etc.) in order to settle where the action of the State limited individual action. But there were two things in the fundamental law that gave an eminently practical character to these conceptions that might pass for abstract ones: the organisation of a body having among its powers that of watching the Constitution was enacted and specially the individual guarantees respected and that body was the Supreme Court of federal Justice that, unfortunately, ceased to be immovable; and the organisation of a means to put every person harmed or threatened in his guarantees by an authority, into direct contact with that Supreme Court whose primordial duty it was to shield him. This institution gives our fundamental code its highly original character. Analogous resources are to be found in the Anglo-Saxon constitutional practices that inspired the authors of articles 101 and 102, as also of those containing, in some of our vernacular constitutions, the dispositions that were the germ of the *juicio de amparo*; but none of those recourses showed the characters of logical precision and liberal amplitude possessed by that instituted in the Code of 1857.



Pelagius Antony de Labastida y Dávalos

The Reform, daughter of a speculative political philosophy but obliged to take into account also the philosophy of a fact that was realising by the necessity of things; was incorporated in the Constitution that suppressed the *fueros*, this being an exigency of the equalitarian logic solemnly proclaimed by the authors of the Constitution. «Equality, they said, is the great law in the Republic;» with this suppression all classes became legally extinguished and nevertheless, revolutionary necessity required the legal formation of a politically excommunicated class, a group of pariahs excluded from electoral right, whose name was the *Clergy*. The same necessity obliged the Constituent assembly to forbid cor-

porations the acquisition of landed property and these contradictions between the principles and the ineludible revolutionary fatality gave the enemies of the Constitution a motive to attack it on its good effects; but as the censured dispositions were just those intimately connected with the actual evolution of the country, they proved being the vital, the positive, the ever lasting ones.

Comonfort's government scarcely insisting on the social part of the Constitution, attacked it from its political side: the president was a federalist only pro forma merely submitting to this exigency of the local liberal groups, it being certain that up to then the only means for central governments to prevent their complete nullification by the State governments was to have recourse to partial and provisional dictatures by means of *extraordinary faculties*; the constant alternative in the federal periods was this: or supreme government at the



Morelia. — Monument to Melchior Ocampo

mercy of local exigencies or the constitutional dispositions suspended; with our history, our geography and our actual social constitution, our true political managements must needs be a *dictature* in order not to be an *anarchy*; but dictature was abhorrent because it had nearly always been instead of a central motor of the live forces of the country in the sense of its evolution, a despotism extorting the country for the profit of one man, and this abhorrence pervaded all the plan of organisation of government set forth in the Constitution.

Indeed, the Constitution made the executive power a mere agent of the legislative power. Excepting the faculty of nominating and deposing the ministers and other office holders of the Union with certain exceptions, that of disposing of the permanent army on land and sea, that of starting ports and installing custom-houses and that of pardoning, all its other faculties were dependent on the authorisation or ratification of the Congress that for its own

part disposed of a most ample bundle of all sorts of faculties, the States being allotted all those not specified in the Constitution. So it was disposed also in the United States Constitution, rather copied than understood, whence there resulted the most singular phenomenon of a federacy without a federal Chamber, without a Senate, with a unitarian Congress in the French revolutionary style.

The truth is that in spite of this subordination of the Executive under the Legislative, ours was not a properly parliamentary government, because Parliament could not impose a ministry or cabinet on the president who in this matter conserved his full liberty, no want of confidence vote of Congress having legal force to oblige him to change his secretaries; it was a representative government and nothing more, with the particularity that the president uniting in his person the votes of the majority of the nation quite in the same fashion as Congress, must consider himself, by the very form of his election, a power in front of the other; the Constitution created a Caesar by plebiscitarian suffrage and then disarmed him in detail; only one thing they had not contrived to deprive him of: the physical force, that is to say, the army.

At the moment the Constitution was promulgated it was not possible to put it into practice; the formidable reaction raised against it by the anti-reformist spirit, allowed neither electoral nor individual liberty, not even at so small a dose as the social state consented; neither the press, nor the teaching from the pulpit, nor the rural serf, nor the man victim of the *leoy*, could be free in 1857; nor was it possible to suppress capital punishment for political crimes; nothing or scarcely anything could be done; the law proved to be an *ideal* and it is still so in a great part; what was needful to save thereof was the Reform, was that element which transforming the conditions of society would permit the national evolution and the realisation of the great principles of the new code.

The president of the Republic, the day after his constitutional election and his solemnly being sworn, proposed himself this dilemma: or to govern with the Constitution and provoke civil war, absolutely disarming power in front of same, or consider it null because impracticable and conjure down civil war by means of this concession to society everywhere

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John Joseph Baz

protesting against the new code. The truth is the Constitution might be reformed since the moment Congress and most of the State legislatures were acting, since they composed the Constituent power in permanency and no new assembly or extraordinary convention was necessary to attain that end; the truth is the first constitutional Congress granted Comonfort the extraordinary faculties he requested; if he needed more to conjure anarchy he must ask them and if Congress denied them he had but to follow the noble example set by Arista; the deputies would have shrunk back before the consequences of that act, would have rendered the president all his popularity. But this, ill counselled, persuaded it was necessary to proclaim a dictatorship of conciliation and of middle terms, eager to demonstrate his work of uniting incompatible programmes was viable, this being his supreme ambition, allowed a conspiracy of censure and epigram against constitutional order to gather round himself. This *fronde*, echoed, it must be confessed, by the whole Mexican society, was not started by the conservatives but by the moderates with the participation even of some of the foremost members of the radical party; from talk they passed to vows, to wishes, to proposals of remedies for the evil arising from a Constitution that was a *strait-jacket* put on the president; then there were secret conferences; there was a *pure* and one of the most resolute ones, John Joseph Baz, who believing that, in order to save something of the Reform and to render that something definitive, it was necessary to sacrifice a good deal temporarily, took part in those preparations of what every body thought certain: the *coup d'état*. The president fully accordant that the situation was unsustainable felt something like horror to swerve from the legal road and vacillated as he always did.

Meanwhile the month of December 1857 arrived and the complot was on the point to become a fact: the military force at Mexico was ready to second the president, the governors of the States had been solicited to follow the same road; the most important one of Veracruz was consentient and the truth is nearly all felt convinced the new fundamental law was not practicable at those moments and thoroughly relied on the probity, on the prestige of Comonfort. A denunciation founded on an authentic correspondence produced before Congress by a deputy precipitated the course of events; the representatives ordered a process to be taken out against the conspirer; Mr. Payno haughtily assumed all the responsibility for the political crime. Then the brigade commanded by general Zuloaga, the confident of Comonfort, pronounced at Tacubaya and quietly occupied the capital. Mr. Juarez, president of the Supreme Court of Justice, was put into prison in company of other eminent reformists and the president adhered to the *plan of Tacubaya* «exchanging for those of a miserable revolutionist the titles of his constitutional installation» as he said himself. The majority of Congress protested most energetically against the supreme magistrate's treason to law and dissolved.

The Tacubaya platform was brief and clear: «The Constitution ceases to be valid because it does not satisfy the aspirations of the country; on account of the unanimous vote of the people Comonfort is recognised president with omnipotent faculties; a Congress will be convoked to elaborate a Constitution; meanwhile there will be a government Counsel.» The immense rejoicing of the clergy and the reactionary party disquieted Comonfort, resolved to place himself above the parties in order to dominate them, not at the head of one he hated to combat the other whose partisan he had been all his life. He formed his Counsel with the moderates of both factions and waited; he did not wait long. At first there came adhe-

sions from Veracruz, Puebla, San Luis, Tampico. A few days later, all was manifestly changed; Zuloaga and the reactionary officers who eagerly grouped round him pretended to exact from Comonfort the suppression of all the reformist measures; on the strength of this support the conservative counsellors endeavoured to the utmost to persuade the rebel president to join them; in the interior States the governors of Querétaro, Michoacan, Jalisco, Guanajuato formed a coalition and denied their adhesion to the Tacubaya platform; the reformists hastened to gather round the banner of the Constitution setting one fact in front of another. Comonfort's vacillations reached their acme; he was visibly repentant; the news that Veracruz had *unpronounced* decided him at last and he tried to approach the *coalition* formed in the interior believing himself master of the military elements in the capital. He was mistaken; before the middle of January (1858) the garrison pronounced anew and directly against Comonfort who prepared to resist; the president of the Supreme Court, being set at liberty and repairing to the interior, the Constitution got its standard-bearer and right, diffused, so to say, in the coalition, was going to be personified in Juárez. Comonfort, meanwhile, struggled in Mexico; being convinced that «with the Tacubaya platform no hope for liberty remained, whereas with the Cons-



John Zuazua

titution it was not impossible to assure order since it might be reformed in a good sense» (these are his own words), he endeavoured to persuade his adversaries or to vanquish them; but considering this impossible he left Mexico at the end of January and his country a few days later. In that fearful crisis there was no need of a great heart, but of a great character; no Comonfort, a Juárez; it was a good luck that his enormous mistake eliminated him; at the end, by dint of good intention, he would have sophisticated all the reformist work. Certainly, for high reasons, the Republic pardoned the patriot the mistake of the statesman; but history, having the right of judgement and not only of analysis and synthesis, performs before Comonfort the same part as the people of Mexico saluting him with an immense applause at his entrance into Constitution and beholding him with a sad and profound silence when he withdrew vanquished and alone.



Panorama of Puebla
(From a photograph by Bequet)

CHAPTER II

THE THREE YEARS WAR

1858-1859-1860

1858. VICTORIOUS EXPANSION OF THE REACTION. SETTLEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. 1859. MILITARY DICTATURE IN MEXICO. THE REFORM LAWS. MATERIAL EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN THE CONTENDING PARTIES. FOREIGN AID. 1860. UTMOST EXERTIONS OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION. DISSOLUTION OF THE REACTIONARY RESISTANCE. TRIUMPH OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

WITH a pertinacious endeavour, Santa Anna's dictature purposed renewing the sap and splendour of the army and a select group formed in the Military College, chiefly, or tried in the practical school of the civil wars, but which composed of young men, nearly all of them ambitious and worshippers of the military privileges, prepared, in the luxurious and picturesque corps created by the dictator, to replace or push the veterans of the war with the United States and the Santa Anna revolts. Among them there were, before all, Zuloaga, Robles Pezuela, Echeagaray, Woll; among the young ones there were the brand new generals Osollos and Miramon, protagonists of the military struggle against Comonfort, and between those generals strong by their age and these ones strong by their youth

the transition was marked by some brave, fanatical, terrible officers, warriors in the strict significance of the word, whose typical representatives were Marquez, Thomas Mejia, the Cobos. Forming a close banded sheaf in the capital of the Republic, without precise political ideas, all identified in their disdainful hatred against the governments leaning on the *national guard*, fond of war for war by a professional habit, feeling sure of the applause of decent society, of the rich families among whom the rancour against the reformist ideas was a religion, relying on the coffers of the clergy and certain of the military success they were getting ready to conquer the Republic sword in hand and to dispute for power; that was a gigantic adventure they undertook without a scruple, with rejoicing valour.

They began with giving themselves a president; they gathered the principal conservatives living in the capital, important political men, surpassing juriconsults, clergymen, literati, generals, landowners, the bloom of the counter-revolution and from this meeting there issued as president the author of the Tacubaya platform, he who would oppose less obstacles to the play of ambitions in full incubation, general Zuloaga; and directly the army, the actual one, set in motion towards the interior. What was it going to do?

In the centre of the *Bajío*, between Querétaro, Guanajuato and Jalisco, a nucleus of resistance to the anti-constitutional reaction had been organised; this nucleus gained organic consistency since Juarez sheltered under the banner of the coalition and was recognised and proclaimed legitimate head of the government; against the fact that seemed indefectible, triumphant through the desertion and flight of Comonfort, he set the right and he being all the right because no organ of the constitutional sovereignty was in aptitude to perform its functions, he assumed the whole power and was at the same time people, executive, legislative and judicial power; this was not foreseen in the Constitution, but it lay in the incontrollable force of things. The individual guarantees necessarily remained suspended and capital punishment for political crimes, confiscation and banishment set their spectres on the shut book of a Constitution of which nothing remained alive, nothing but a man.

He was a man; he was no remarkable intellectuality; far inferior to his two chief collaborators, to Ocampo whose talent appeared saturated with passion for liberty, with love for nature, hence his aversion for christianism, a true heathen of the Encyclopædia who by dint of a fundamental optimism rose to the clairvoyance of futurity; to Lerdo de Tejada, a Mexican Turgot, less philosophic but as hitting right as the other in the definition of the economical problem latent in the social and political ones, all reflexion in diagnosing the illness, all will to heal it. Juarez possessed the great quality of the indigenous race he belonged to without a drop of mixture: perseverance. The other confessors of the Reform had faith in unfailing triumph; Juarez, too, believed therein, but secondarily; what his conscience was full of was the necessity that duty must be fulfilled although disaster and death were ensuing thereof. Through the Constitution and the Reform he beheld the redemption of the indigenous republic; that was his actual ideal, of that he was an unpliant devotee; to emancipate it from the clergy, from rural servitude, from ignorance, from retirement, from silence, that was his innermost and religious longing; therefor he was a liberal, therefor he was a reformer, therefore he was great; it is not true he was impassible, he suffered much and felt deeply; his countenance did not ruffle but his heart did: morally he is an entity forming the vertex of the dark pyramid of our civil struggles. In

comparison with him the talents, the words, the acts of the chief reactionists are nothing: they were what was passing away, what was going off; he was what remained, the everlasting, conscience.

When the cross-bearers of the reaction went out in search of laurels and *Te-Deums*, loaden with blessings by archbishop Garza as instruments of Providence to remedy the evils of the Church, the coalition had got ready an army under the command of honourable and indifferent general Parrodi. Juarez and his ministers went to reside at Guadalajara; they did not wait long; before the middle of March, the coalition, completely vanquished by Osollos, had dissolved; the governor of Guanajuato, Doblado, capitulated without fighting and the president, captured, was going to succumb amid a riot of the soldiery at Guadalajara when the pathological eloquence of William Prieto first startled the platoon that was going to fire and then caused them to raise their muskets. The constitutional cause would have received a death blow and the history of our country would have run a different course.

Everything seemed to yield to the formidable onset of the young reactionary chieftains. The president was fleeing and obliged to leave the Republic and cross the isthmus of Panamá and then from the United States he repaired to Veracruz where, by the care of governor Zamora, constitutional government was installed in a regular way and began acting. This mere fact of a legitimate government basing its lawfulness not on proclamations but on the very text of the law, and officiating in the first port of the Republic, resolved the question converting it into a question of time, whatever the triumphs of the reactionaries might be. And they were signalised: a constitutionalist army formed by Vidaurri and commanded by a man of admirable integrity and valour, Zuazua, disputed Miramon the passage from Guadalajara to San Luis (Carretas); although obliged to retrocede he possessed himself of Zacatecas and after the death of Osollos justly deplored by the reactionists because this officer was the man of most heart and most military aptitude on whom an already impossible cause counted, reoccupied San Luis. After the death of Osollos, Miramon occupied the first place; he was going to consolidate it with signalised victories. Miramon was twenty five years old and it is prodigious how he contrived to impress the old army, how he made himself obeyed by all, how he accomplished his immense ambition almost without becoming conceited and he availed himself of the admirable war instrument he had at his disposal to organise his campaigns with a nearly infallible eyegance and an almost miraculous boldness of execution.

Miramon afraid to be obliged perpetually to go and come between San Luis threatened by Vidaurri and Guadalajara menaced by Degollado, determined first to make an end of the latter; he did not succeed; Degollado vanquished or not, continued mastering the South of Jalisco while Miramon, after an urgent visit to Mexico in search of resources, concentrated the best part of the conservative forces against Vidaurri and Zuazua once more masters of San Luis and dealt them a terrible defeat (Ahualulco). The constitutionalist army of the North was not to reappear in the first line, but Zuloaga's government, after its triumph at Ahualulco, began to become aware of the vitality of the reformist cause, for not many days later (October 1858) general Blanco by a most risky venture nearly possessed himself of the capital of the Republic, and Degollado, the indefatigable Degollado who began to be the despair of the *Tacubayist* army, seized Guadalajara. It is true this triumph was short-

lived, because in the month of December, the constitutionalist general, obliged to return to the South of Jalisco, was completely discomfited by Miramon in a decisive battle near Colima.

The year 1858 ended in Mexico with an important political comedy. Two prominent generals of the reactionary camp (Echeagaray and Robles Pezuela) concerted a military movement and under the pretext to form a third party reconciling the other two, possessed themselves of the capital, overthrew Zuloaga and had victorious Miramon nominated president; but this instead of accepting the nomination, reproved what had been done and restored Zuloaga who, of course, nominated Miramon his substitute and yielded him his place.

The first period of the war could not be graver for the reformists nor sadder for the country. The religious character of the struggle made it a keen anguish for the families; the clergy did not foster it officially, but, as was humanly very natural, put all their sympathy on the side of the Tacubayists and their resources too. Owing to these the reaction had been able to organise the armies that had destroyed the best elements of the constitutionalist resistance. The fearful thing was that the combats and incessant executions with which both parties blood-stained their banners, carried to exhaustion the anæmia of the country. This state of things did not escape the observation of the powers with



Leonard Marquez

which we entertained relations and which were wont to make their squadrons visit our ports, always with some peremptory exaction without coming to blows owing to the diplomacy and condescension of our government. In our international friendships a division began to make its appearance: all the governments represented at Mexico had recognised *at first sight*, so to say, the government of Zuloaga; but in the course of the year the Washington cabinet was repentant of this step and sought its way to acknowledge the constitutional government; that of Spain, on the contrary, prepared to show its efficacious sympathy for the reaction; France and England kept observing with cooler blood, but through the same eye glass as the government of H. Cath. M.

The year 1859 was inaugurated by the installation of general Miramon's autocracy;

his character was that of a substitute president; the truth was that as long as the reaction and its triumphant leader agreed, he would be the sole head of the power. And he expressed it quite clearly: union of the parties is impossible; the meeting of a Congress can take place only when the States will have recognised the Tacubaya plan, that is to say, never. Miramon seemed modestly to suppose his nomination had no other aim than to gather all the elements necessary to seize Veracruz, the bulwark of the Constitution; but he felt himself absolute master of the power and by his juvenile petulance, in all his dispositions, proclamations and manifestoes there was predominant the keen consciousness of his personal mission, of his *self*. His rule was an autocracy. It was quite natural; the clergy had designated him as the Providential man and both parties in different tones called him since then *the young Maccabee*.

He was going to undertake the campaign of Veracruz: banquets, parades, religious ceremonies, nomination of a new cabinet wherein the moderate conservative element was predominant and big taxes marked the beginning of the campaign; the advance was a firm one as far as Veracruz overthrowing the resistance opposed by the government forces in one of the most difficult passages of the gigantic grades through which the mountains slope towards the coast. The reactionist army took up their positions in front of the place and waited some days for the arrival of a convoy of money and ammunitions indispensably needed for the attack. The convoy did not leave Mexico and Miramon withdrew his army and undertook in due order the ascent towards the central plateau. To this big military failure there came to be added a gross moral disgrace for the reaction: the 11th of April.

As soon as the news that the best part of the Tacubayist army was going down to Veracruz reached general Degollado who in his very defeats recovered new strength for fight and who after his discomfiture had gathered anew at the South of Jalisco his dispersed military elements, he reappeared in the Bajío and leaving behind Marquez who pretended to dominate the West from Guadalajara, advanced towards the capital; his aim was either to give a surprise or to attract on himself the thunderbolt that was going to fall on Veracruz. General Degollado was an excellent citizen, model of republican virtues and indefatigable improviser of armies, but he was no warrior: he let the best troops the reaction had at its disposal in the interior agglomerate in the capital and suffered a frightful rout (April 11th).

Once more the constitutional army was disbanded, once more Degollado, almost without elements of war, sought the way to recompose it; there is no need to say he succeeded; that army was a phoenix. General Miramon arriving at Mexico at the end of the combat ordered the captured officers to be shot; general Marquez, the brand-new victor who had got on the battle field his division general's sash, had the order executed comprising therein the surgeons of the vanquished army and some civilians who were impiously shot.

Since the beginning of the struggle the abominable custom was established to shoot the captured chieftains; the constitutionalists inaugurated it (Zuazua at Zacatecas) deeming necessary the punishment of those who took arms against legality, in order to hold in contagion; as a requital the reactionists killed not only the officers but every person decried as a reformer that fell into their hands, specially manifesting a ferocious hatred for the lawyers who at the same time handled the pen, the word and the sword in that struggle: they considered them, and they were not mistaken, the soul of the reformist resistance and war

appeared as a struggle to death between the clergy and army on one side and the lawyers on the other. Marquez, with his spirit, with his hatred, caused the wave of blood to rise to a height it would have been thought impossible it might ever reach: the shooting of the surgeons produced an immense resound in the country and even beyond; the reaction having placed itself outside of progress, by that act placed itself outside of human civilisation: that could not be an *order of things*; it was a bloody murderous adventure; on the 11th of April the anti-reformist faction made its confession before the world and the defenders of religion and rights dropped unmasked into a swamp of blood.

Miramón's failure at Veracruz and Degollado's disaster at Tacubaya made it evident that the struggle ruining every element of work in the country and bleeding it incessantly obliged the villagers to flee into the fields or to exploit systematically, converting them into a profession, banditism and guerrillerism, being usually the same thing, and provoked in every conscience where there remained some embers of patriotism an infinite painful craving for peace; only the clergy and the professional army deeply identified opposed on their side every compromise not including before all things the sacrifice of the Reform; only the group whose ideas were personified in Juárez opposed any compromise whose first clause did not imply the acceptance of the pact of 1857. Conciliation was impossible: private people began to lose their interest in the triumph of a determined party; their particular interest was speaking louder than their religious feelings exploited even in their most recondite roots by the clergy and in face of the perspective of exactions by the guerrilla in the country, of plunder or sequestration and forcible loan in the town, of embargo and prison everywhere, a keen exasperation invaded all who were thoughtful and had no personal interest in the contention.

While they were listening to the monstrous beating of the hammer of civil war striking the bones of the country both parties sought the way to bring over to their side an element that would break the equilibrium of the balance and give one the victory; the reactionist forces reconquered the eternal battle field of the *Bajío*, but the reaction was definitively vanquished in Sonora and Sinaloa and new liberal leaders appeared on the stage or were approaching the foreground of the theatre in that dire drama, like González Ortega who by means of terrific decrees scared the clergy away from the States he succeeded in domineering alternately, as Zacatecas and Durango. The reactionary army was sentenced to victory; the first big disaster it might suffer would doom it to death; the constitutionalist army, on the contrary, was forming from rout to rout, was learning to fight, was feeling the necessity of discipline and art, civic militia was transforming into troops of the line; the old army was breeding the new one combating it without truce and vanquishing it; that struggle was an education.

The normal resources being exhausted and scarcely by squeezing hard it was possible to find the means for living the following day, the properties of the clergy having become extraordinarily reduced, because their lands were at the mercy of the liberal forces or already adjudged in virtue of the Lerdo law or occupied by constitutionalist chiefs who deprived the cathedrals of their plate and their jewels and every church they could of its riches; all this dooming the parties to a sort of inanition and letting alive only the numberless bands of highwaymen led by banditti whose types were Rojas and Carbajal with

the constitutionalist banner and Cobos and Lozada with the banner of the cross, it was clear that both directing groups would have recourse to ruinous loans, to shameful treaties, to the capture of *conductus* (mails), etc.

Most important was the very explicit and very cordial acknowledgment of the government at Veracruz by that at Washington and although it was not an unexpected event it produced a sort of stupor among the conservatives: the North-American aid in the shape of arms and money (nothing more was possible) could prove fatal for them. General Miramon, at the middle of the year, issued a manifesto in which his *self* dominated a whole programme of more administrative, in the strictly concrete sense of the word, than political purport, disclosing the irresistible force of the revolution and his incurable vacillations as a leader. In the tremendous crisis the Republic was undergoing such programmes proved superfluous; the directors of the policy were entirely at the mercy of the circumstances; these were the whole actual scheme; there could subsist only a general drift, not a rule. The impetuous substitute surprised the representatives of the Church with secret terror enveloping with protestations of devotion *to the cause of religion*, as they said in the cant of those days, the idea that it would be necessary to respect the interests created by the Lerdo law of amortisation. However, *amen* was the only answer to what the invincible cross-bearer said.

Marimon's manifesto was coincident with the manifesto-programme of president Juarez and probably intended to be an answer to it. Juarez and his ministers offered to carry into effect the reform based on the separation between the State and the Church and they immediately accomplished their purpose: considering the clergy's behaviour during civil war had been absolutely hostile to the reformist sake, it was deprived of its estates; this confiscation, being an eminently revolutionary measure since the Constitution forbade it, was called *nationalisation* of the ecclesiastical estates. As a natural consequence thereof they added the suppression of the monastic orders, the institution of civil registration and sundry prohibitions of governmental order. Marimon's manifesto responded to a pressing exigency of the circumstances and ventured not to look at the future face to face; the president and his government looked forward with serene confidence and speaking of the sure transformation of the country by means of material and intellectual progress, a transformation having for its starting point the triumph of the reformist cause, those apostles rose to the most lofty top of their faith whence they beheld the sun rising behind the far opposite tops; below on the valleys of Anáhuac there were accumulating the clouds of frightful storms throwing all into darkness; those apostles prophesied with a supreme clairvoyance the indefectible arrival of day; viewed from the ending point of our century the reactionist manifesto appears like a *farewell* babbled in the shade; that of the reformers is a welcome to a new world.

The Reform laws, although expected by all, caused an unspeakable impression: the group of those interested in the triumph increased at the rate of the fright shown by those who, not so much for religious considerations that were terribly fallacious, as has been proven with incontrovertible evidence by the fact we all observe to-day, but for other reasons of a positive and financial order, must lose all by the legislation. The Episcopate spoke; it formulated, as was its right and its duty, a solemn protest based on this conception: the government at Veracruz cannot decree anything, because it is not the legitimate

government this being that emanant from the Tacubaya plan. This confession was sufficient to authorise the nationalisation as a punishment; even if the Episcopate were right on the ground of pure legalness, and it could not possibly be so, the constitutionalist government could not admit of it: that would have been a suicidal concession; consequently, the Church must be considered a rebel; hence the necessity of the penalty.

The head of the Mexican Episcopate sustained the Church had not done anything exceptional to foster civil war, having merely granted, as it was wont to do, the government installed at Mexico the resources requested by the same. Let us put aside the extraordinary displays of a most natural sympathy on behalf of the reaction, and let us forget there was no reactionist victory of those that soaked the ground with Mexican blood but had its eco of *Te-Deums* and *alleluiahs*; let us remember only that the Church, excommunicating all who obeyed the Constitution and law, authorised all resistance giving it a formidably mortiferous character, the religious character; this is the perfectly certain and irrefutably documented fact: we ignore whether the Church acted well or ill; she thought she acted well, others thought the contrary and proceeded.

However, all these considerations were of a secondary moment, the evolution of the Republic towards the complete dominion of herself, towards the full institution of the laical State, had an unsurmountable obstacle: the Church constituted as a territorial and spiritual power at the same time; in spiritual affairs the State could not do anything, in the material ones it could; it disarmed its great adversary of its territorial power and passed on. This was fatal; it was necessary: in politics necessity is the law, is the criterion of what is just and unjust. An individual sometimes may and must sacrifice himself; not so a people. And what hindered the evolution of the State, was also an encumbrance to that of the Church: since the Reform up to our days conscious catholicism has gained more ground in Mexico than it possessed when it was the absolute master of the power.

The results of the constitutional government's policy that in the long run must group



Thomas Mejía

and already was grouping around it, with the decoy of the clergy's estates, so many rights, so many interests and so great appetites, did not come immediately and the country, deeply exhausted, supported the prolongation of the crisis only by a wonder. The end of the terrible year 1859 was drawing near; the reactionaries, convinced of the impossibility of any compromise after the Reform laws, were obliged to set their only hope on war and as before the two poles of the strategical combinations were Marquez in the West and Miramon in the East. To annihilate, at least temporarily, Degollado's indestructible armies, to sweep all others, to reach the Pacific and to return against Veracruz and fulminate it, was a natural plan; it was adopted by substitute Miramon; certainly, he ran the risk, not of a defeat (in his youthful arrogance he felt sure of dominating fortune), but of being supplanted by Marquez, the actual hero of the uncompromising reactionists, emerging amid the smoke of a new victory. Just in those days the formidable proconsul had possessed himself of a money conduct destined for exportation, under the pretext to clothe and arm his wretched troops; Miramon ordered the robbed sums to be given back and marched to Guadalajara; he had to pass over Degollado's army that had failed to get disorganised by the retreat of the North division and by the scandalous defection of Vidaurri who assumed in his person the sovereignty of a part of the frontier.

Miramon effected an admirable campaign in the *Bajío*; in Estancia de las Vacas he discomfited Degollado and continued his triumphal march to the capital of Jalisco; at Colima he inflicted the constitutionalists a new defeat and strong by the immense prestige of his victories he deposed Marquez and bade him come to Mexico to account for his behaviour. Thus that leader, free, self-sufficient and bold, returned to the capital, visibly protected by Providence, as his partisans stated, and prepared the second expedition, the decisive one, against Veracruz.

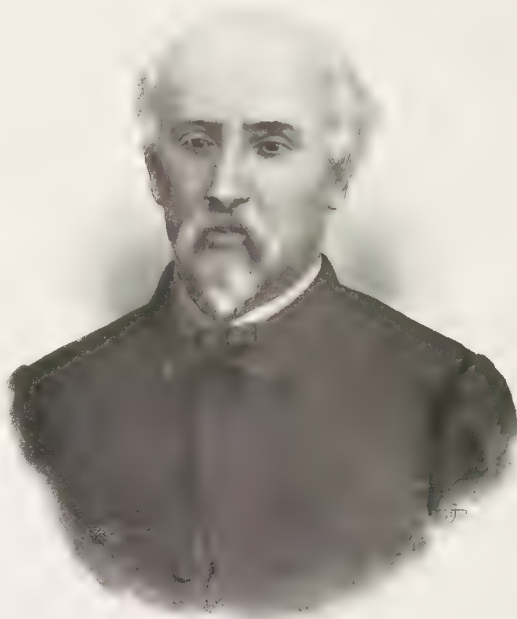
The truth is all was afflicting in the spectacle offered by the Republic, all was disastrous. One idea became dominant among the heads of the contending groups: it is urgent to hasten towards the end; the struggle cannot be continued long without provoking a foreign intervention; but in order to end it a big sum is needed to assure one army a final superiority over the other. In front of this necessity felt as a kind of instinct for self conservation with its mere animal exigencies, every other notion retroceded into dimness; such a dissolution of moral feelings in order to obey the suggestion of only one is an ineludible effect of the political crises when they get indefinitely prolonged. Both parties were subject to it; Miramon contracted with the banking firm managed by the Swiss merchant Jecker the emission of a loan of fifteen million dollars whose bonds were to be admitted for a fifth part in every payment to the Fisc and their interests would be guaranteed half by the government and half by the banker; these were the famous Jecker bonds that for less than one million burdened the treasury with fifteen. The constitutional government entered into another terrible bargain: the Mac-Lane treaty.

The United States prepared to intervene in Mexico and president Buchanan, because of the insecurity of our frontiers, in a message had consulted the Congress about an armed intervention destined to help the constitutional government. This, wishing to avoid any intervention and, doubtlessly with this aim, had been trying some time ago to obtain pecuniary resources in the United States, now negotiated for four million dollars that actually

became reduced to two, a covenant yielding the North-American Union such franchises at Tehuantepec and in a zone of the Northern frontier as were equivalent to condominium, to cession of a part of the Republic's sovereignty over the national territory. That such a pact could seem feasible to men of the patriotic temper of Juarez and Ocampo is an amazing fact and nobody would hesitate to brand it as a political crime, had not the hallucination produced by the political fever on its height attenuated the responsibilities. A little while before, the person commissioned by Zuloaga's government had pacted at Paris the most humiliating of treaties (that of Mon-Almonte) with Spain. No money was obtained in exchange from Spain, but rather efficient sympathies and transcendent complicities.

The interior of the country remained rid for many months not of guerrillas that pullulated everywhere and were humming around the towns of some importance like bees around their hive, but at least of considerable bodies or corps of army; Gonzalez Ortega was a cloud at the horizon of the Bajío; but he was less a general than the perpetual struggler whose name was Degollado; this was a tribune, a poet, an exalted mind like the commissaries of the Convention in the armies; the rest remained unseen or was little seen.

The peal of bells, the sacred songs, the vows of what was called here aristocracy, the exultations of the people at the disposal of the police, greeted the crusade army starting for Veracruz (February 1860). At Puebla the invincible substitute received an immense popular ovation. In the first days of March he arrived before Veracruz with his army perfectly organised. The port being inexpugnable as long as it was not shut in from the sea side, Miramon prepared government a surprise; relying on the complaisance of the Spanish authorities, he had got organised in Havannah, for account of the reactionary government, a small squadron that made its appearance in front of Veracruz at the same time as the besiegers. Government had become aware that this attempt was going to be committed and had the chiefs of the rebel squadron denied the right to use the national banner declaring them pirates and informing thereof the foreign ships that thus were in aptitude to seize them; so it happened; the two pirate ships were attacked and



Joseph Lopez Uruga

captured at Anton Lizardo by an American frigate on the same day they made their appearance. This was a serious failure for Miramon; he attempted an agreement, a compromise with the government that appeared resolved to treat only on the constitutional ground and he immediately retired. Everybody understood decline was going to begin for the reactionists; Miramon was convinced thereof, however his self-love obliged him to procure the continuation of the struggle.

One moment luck seemed to smile anew at him; in the interior the constitutional banner had been raised by an old veteran of the civil wars, without determined convictions, though, in general terms, disaffected to the clergy; ambitious and clever, of a great reputation in the army as a technical officer, general Lopez Uraga brought the constitutional groups what they were in lack of, science; he entered on the stage gaining a victory that was a master stroke; he directly marched on Guadalajara; Miramon left Mexico in search of him. General Uraga, forcing the marches, wanted to seize Guadalajara before coming into contact with Miramon; but before this town very well defended by Woll a French officer also habituated to our discords he wrecked and was put out of combat.

Miramon had left Mexico carrying among his equipments the Tacubayist president Zuloaga who wanted to reassume command and whom he had told the whipping phrase: «I am going to show you how presidencies are won.» The captive president contrived at last to evade, this being the motive that, soon afterwards, led a meeting composed of the most recalcitrant members of the reaction, to nominate the young substitute provisory president. He passed through Guadalajara freed by Woll and continued his march to the South of Jalisco pursuing another young general, of Nuevo Leon, who had been unwilling to follow Vidaurri in his defection and who commanded the retreat of the army wrecked at Guadalajara; this general was named Ignatius Zaragoza and he moved his army with so much discretion causing it to increase in the very defeat, and he situated it so cleverly in front of Miramon that this retroceded to Guadalajara. In the middle of the year the military aspect of the country was already favourable to the reformists. Miramon, situated in the centre of the interior in order to check the several corps that manifestly intended to come into contact, was unable to hinder their union; Zaragoza, Gonzalez Ortega and other leaders (Degollado conserved his rank as chief general) shut his way to the capital; Miramon marched swiftly against them and was undone at Silao; he arrived at the capital almost alone. There he accepted his new investiture as president; with this title he received the Spanish ambassador Pacheco, a remarkable jurisconsult and unlucky diplomatist who in the very moments the reaction was sinking placed on her side the prestige and the sympathies of Spain. The mind of the ambassador unaware of the situation depending evidently on the success of a battle or two must have been too much influenced by the supplication made on behalf of peace by nearly all the persons of importance in the country in virtue of their pecuniary position: «The dignity of the nation, her independence, the estates, the freedom and the lives of the Mexicans, all, all is at the mercy of the attacks of blind force, all is in jeopardy or ruin, all is victim of the fury of civil war tearing society.» The uncompromising reactionists, of course, haughtily disowned that deprecation; either reaction or death was their device and many of those who told so actually sealed with their blood their noble and blind political faith.

The wind-up was drawing near at a swift pace, the vanquishers at Silao having taken the road to the capital, retroceded on Guadalajara defended by the brained general Castillo; the reformist army was lacking resources for great movements; there were the estates of the clergy to respond for the debts that might be contracted in order to put an end to war; but at those moments resources were needed with increasing urgency: so Doblado seized a money conduct and the general in chief Degollado embodying the most scrupulous probity of the Revolution, took on himself all the responsibility of the act: government not having funds to indemnify the spoliated by and by allowed a sufficient warrant on the nationalised estates.

And whilst the last act of the drama was preparing frightful and bloody, the painful labour that had been working in the conscience of Degollado, induced him to seek, in accordance with the representative of England, a means to end the civil war forthwith, a strange means having for its starting point the meeting at Mexico of the diplomatic representatives and those of the States governments to declare the adoption of the reformist principles and to convoke a Congress that might give the country a new constitution. Mr. Degollado's project was disowned at Mexico and terminatively condemned at Veracruz; Juarez, painfully but justly deprived the well deserved leader of his post in the army. The command was entrusted to Gonzalez Ortega and the siege of Guadalajara began. Miramon sent Marquez to succour the besieged and it was necessary to push the blockade by blood and by fire, 125 guns spitting death upon the unlucky town. The siege of Guadalajara that was a series of assaults up to that which determined Castillo's capitulation at the moment when Marquez approached, is an epic page; during several days Guadalajara was a hell of extermination and valour. In the hands of Zaragoza and Leander Valle, two generals of thirty years of age, the reformist army became an instrument warmed to white-heat by the aspiration that exalted the souls and the passion that animated the hearts. Guadalajara had no sooner capitulated than the liberal army put Marquez to flight, almost without a combat, and slowly took the road to the capital, since the first days of November.

The reactionary leaders had always protested they did not lay down the arms because nearly all the towns were theirs and the country sided with them; at that moment quite the contrary was true; excepting Mexico and Puebla, the whole Republic was under the dominion of legality. Their duty was to lay down the arms; but in a meeting of militaries and bishops it was decided the struggle should be continued to the utmost. «If revolution will not limit its pretensions to politics and the exercise of power, if it will not respect the Church, if it will not let the eternal principles of our religion uninjured, if it will not stop short before the sanctum of the family, let us combat the revolution, let us sustain the war, although the social edifice were to fall down over our heads.» These were the supreme words of the head of the reactionary army; they signified nothing, they meant nothing; they were phrases of the stage, they were a tragical attitude valiantly assumed in face of peril; the constitutionalists never attacked the dogmas of religion; the Constitution was the ægis of the family and human right.

It was necessary to raise a new army; among the Mexican population there always exists a latent army; civil war had unconsciously organised the liability to service of the great majority of Mexican people; the *clergy* pulled them out of the *sanctum of the family*

and led them to the battle field. Miramon did so with good success and in order to secure the life of that new armed multitude he seized the funds destined to the bondholders of the English debt and deposited at H. B. M.'s legation, with an excess of international outrage showing the despair and the *save himself who can* of the reaction in its death struggle. That army was completely routed at Calpulalpam in two hours of fierce combat, on the 22nd of December. On the 25th the constitutionalist forces occupied the capital of the Republic. The reaction had succumbed for ever; in order to resuscitate it the first military nation of the world pulling behind herself an Austrian prince and part of Mexican society



Severus del Castillo

was to spend all her prestige and all her power without succeeding in the enterprise. In the world of the ideas reaction was dead already; in that of the facts it had just entered definitively into history. What was figuring thereof in our great national tragedy was a spectre, an apparition; in the ideal, in the social, in the military scope it had ended. It was on the reformist scheme the new Mexican world was going to be built.

In order to defend its properties the clergy had converted the last civil war into a religious contention and the whole ecclesiastical organisation with the supreme hierarchy at its head and all the dogmas up to the fundamental one of

the existence of God, and all the fears, since the fear of hell up to that of the gallows, were joined in a formidable *bastille* as a shelter for the treasures of the Church. All this was abandoned by Providence incessantly invoked to aid the reactionist champions, at the mercy of a handful of improvised thirty years old generals. The gross imprudence of linking the earthly things with the spiritual ones had made revolution a cataclysm and converted a political victory into a religious catastrophe and a stimulant for the young reformist group having their Rousseau in Ocampo, their Diderot in Ignatius Ramirez, their Danton in Altamirano and their Tyrtæus in William Prieto, to undertake the enterprise of uncatholicising the people.

The truth is that in three years of a frightful struggle a transformation had been operated. On the same battle field where the Republic became transformed there was scarcely a corner where they had not listened to the exalted, furious but emancipatory preaching

of the reformist lawyer converted into an apostle and of the reformist officer transformed into a tribune; the plundered church, the monk shot or enlisted in the naked battalions of the *chinaca*, the images of the saints burned in public *autos de fe* by those exasperate iconoclasts, were spectacles that had frightened, commoved and stirred every soul. And why did not those saints defend themselves by miracles? the natives were asking one another stupefied as in the days of the conquest when they saw their idols tumbling down the grades of their kindled *teocallis*? And why was God favouring the impious with victory, the artisan, the domestic of the urban population thoughtfully asked? And these are the matter of fact arguments sowing in the minds of people the seed of the great transformations. That unformed and hardly conscious people stealthily lifted their eyes towards the new ideals and the Equality, Liberty and Solidarity saturating all the articles of the Constitution kindled in many hearts a new religious spirit, the worship of other gods. But the reformist triumph was chiefly due to the middle class of the States, that had gone through the colleges, had their brains full of dreams, their hearts full of ambitions and their stomachs full of appetites; the bourgeoisie gave the new cause its officers, generals, journalists, tribunes, ministers, martyrs and vanquishers. He who surveys the names of the directors of the movement in the minds, on the battle fields, will find out this truth. The reformist wave was a reflux towards the centre. The total result was that the rich from love of peace, the foreign colonist from love of the riches of the clergy, the educated classes from love of the new ideas, the popular classes from a vague longing for improvement, and instinctively seeing in triumph a token of divine protection, composed an either neutral or frankly reformist majority. What was a minority the day after the American invasion was the majority of the country on the eve of the French invasion.

Mexico.—Juarez avenue and Alameda



CHAPTER III

THE INTERVENTION

1861-1867

INTERIOR: ATTEMPTS AT REORGANISATION FRUSTRATED; BANKRUPTCY. EXTERIOR: SECESSION WAR; LONDON CONVENTION. TRANSFORMATION OF A EUROPEAN INTO A FRENCH INTERVENTION; WAR; THE 5th OF MAY; INVASION IS ORGANISING. INVASION TRIUMPHANT; PUEBLA; MEXICO; THE INVADERS ESTABLISH A MONARCHY: ABSOLUTE INANITY OF THE ENTERPRISE; THE CAPITALS IN THE POWER OF THE INVADING ARMY: PRINCE MAXIMILIAN; IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; FATAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE EMPIRE AND THE INTERVENTION. LIBERAL EMPIRE; END OF THE REACTIONARY PARTY. THE UNITED STATES. FINAL ATTEMPT AT CONSOLIDATION OF EMPIRE. JUAREZ LAWFUL DICTATOR. RECONQUEST OF THE COUNTRY IN 1866; DEFINITIVE RETROCESSION OF THE INVASION; DISORGANISATION OF THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT. LAST ACT OF THE DRAMA; PUEBLA; QUERÉTARO; MEXICO. IDENTIFICATION OF FATHERLAND, REPUBLIC AND REFORM.

MEXICO, the preeminently reactionary and clerical town that from its balconies and roofs had applauded all the victories of Miramon and Marquez, that in every one of the impious feasts of civil war had cast into the central streets to draw the cars of the triumph and shout and whistle enthusiasm and rob pocket-handkerchiefs and watches shaking canes and flags, the artisans and the *léperos* (rabble) from their muddy and stenchy wards stretching out at the colossal shade of the convents, Mexico saluted rather deliriously the entrance of Gonzalez Ortega's reformist army. The fact is it was not a clerical town, it was only catholic and, besides, civil war had ended by rendering all people indifferent for anything but peace, because it was the cruel exaction, the scanty produce of toil being brutally exacted

or rather literally robbed by the fiscal agent and the blood sucking *levy* incessantly sequestering the valid man in the family and the workshop to fling him on the *drubbing bench* in the barracks and on the butchery of the battle field. Peace! they all clamoured, the populace on the square and the bourgeois on the balcony and the roof; peace made them ardent and a certain sentiment of clemence and concord they thought they saw in the bountiful smile stereotyped on the sensual lips of the smug general in chief who with his words, his gestures, his greetings, his enthusiasm electrified all and traced on the blue sky of that warm winter morning the parenthesis of hope and glory that was going to unite the two gloomy dramas of the great tragedy of our national history.

There was a pale dreamy light floating in the atmosphere; all who took part in that ovation, the rich and the poor (the rich, tempters of the ambition of the young victorious general whom they wished to induce to deny the president the keys of the Republic because for them Juarez, the *Indian Juarez*, was the systematic, uncompromising, implacable, cold, antipathetic Reform; the poor instigated by the young students and officers who preached them on the cross-roads the most ardent socialist doctrines of Proudhon and Lamennais and showed them with all their grotesque disgustfulness the Franciscan monk conspiring and wielding the dagger, the mercedary tucking up his white *pulque* and *mole* stained habit and dancing the *jarabe* in the balls of the ward, and the bishop plotting the destruction of independence), the rich and the poor vaguely believed a paradisaic era of freedom, fraternity and welfare might begin. «I wonder if the Constitution will turn out to be true!» many a man said in the peculiar idiom of our country.

That splendid act of heroic opera was not long in passing off. Juarez arrived and, agreeable or disagreeable, poetical or prosaic, that Indian of porphyry and bronze brought reality in his hands: with him it was necessary to pass from illusion to truth. The first hours saturated with ideas of concord and pardon were followed in the presence of the men of Veracruz by the practical necessities of the reformist programme. Civil war was not ended; the reactionary leaders remained in the country; of the sixty or seventy thousand armed men that dominated throughout the country fields, roads and towns, the group that had served to triumph proved excessive for the resources of government; it must either be disbanded or left in the hands of the State governments which would avail themselves of their contingents to impose their will on the Federacy as it always had happened; the numerous loose bands would continue threatening everywhere property and security or would swell the reactionary files as it immediately came to pass. The press of the capital and the States, echoing with passionate exaltation the resentments and doles and hatreds of the victorious party, almost limited their political exigencies to a work of justice and vengeance and they seriously talked of raising scaffolds on the squares and transforming government into a revolutionary tribunal. The government had other aims: to rid its way of the men that served as a pretext incessantly to ask for vengeance, and to maintain the young portion of the reformist party in a state of perpetual incandescence by quickly realising with energy and firmness the economical task of the Reform in order to render it irrevocable. The realisation of the first part of the scheme was directed by Ocampo; whilst the minister of war (Gonzalez Ortega) took the necessary measures to put an end to the armed rests of the reaction, Ocampo sent their passports to the minister of Spain, Pacheco, to the apos-

tolie Nuncio and two other foreign ministers who did what they possibly could to retard the fall of the reactionary dictatorship. The grave part of this measure was the expulsion of the Spanish minister; after the protest against the Mon-Almonte treaty this new act seemed

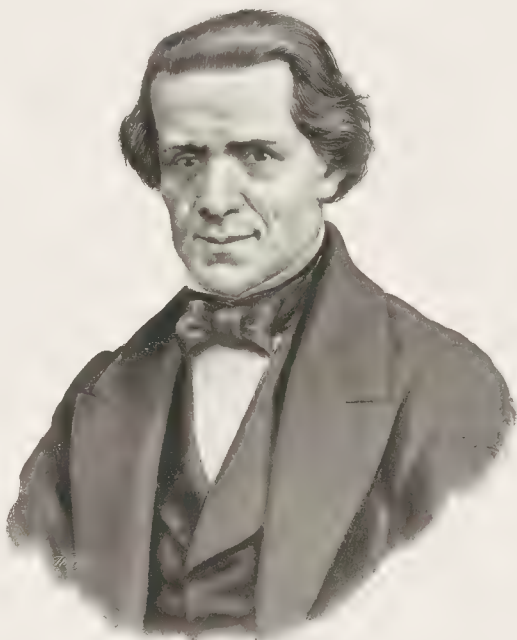


Puebla.—Monument to Zaragoza

a challenge; Spain, in spite of the conscientious explanations the Mexican government gave that of Queen Isabella II, considered it an offence, not an act of war. It was an act of justice; Pacheco was not only an enemy of the reformist and indeed of every democratic government, but he was of opinion Mexico «where all notions of right and all principles of good had been lost, needed that Europe by means of an *armed intervention* forced on her

liberty and order without which there would be no end of her shameful history, scandal and ignominy of civilised mankind» (*sic*). This measure being just, the expulsion of the bishops was prudent; politically a penalty was deserved by those who explicitly and publicly had disowned the authority of national government and it was necessary to get them out of the country in order to avoid justice to turn out a vengeance against them; for else they must have gone to prison, to the dock, to outrage and to atrocious punishments...

The Veracruz men were not fond of power; Ocampo resigned leaving the task to the new ones: Zarco, Ignatius Ramirez, William Prieto... The Reform pursued its course: there was a moment when Society suffered intensely; the ministers considered the Reform an energetic physic on which the salvation of the diseased country depended and which it was urgent to take; there was a good deal of truth in this consideration. However the apparatus, the public procedures for that grand operation, intrusted by force to the most exalted or the most inhumane, hurt so much the secular habits, the respects, the tenderness, the sanctity of traditions and records, the superstitions, sediment of more than three centuries of an unconditional devotion deposited on the bottom of the Mexican organism, that in the inmost part of this organism, in



Melchior Ocampo

the family, even that of the reformer, wherever the normal drift of life was presided over by the Mexican woman all made of piety and sweetness, without more energy than love's nor more reflection than that circumscribed and narrowed by faith, the painful beat of society's heart was felt. The bishops stoned at Veracruz by the mob led by a demagogue intoxicating himself with his own phrases, the walls of the convents falling noisily down at the raging stroke of the pickaxe, the cloisters dismantled, the churches spoliated of their sacred jewels with a brutal irreverence, the violation of the sacrosanct retreat of the poor women praying for their sacrificers, the sackage of the archives, the libraries, the art treasures of the Church that, to be sure, hardly esteemed and usually ignored them, all contributed to create an indefinable uneasiness.

All this was expected, was known by the reformers and just therefore they made haste;

it was necessary to raise between triumphant revolution and a possible reaction a huge wall made of rubbish and ruin, to dig a deep ditch of irreparable facts. And so they did what must be done. But behind the curtains of the sinister pageant of the fulfilment of the Reform the actual drama evolved in the shade of the offices: the financial drama, the scheme of reducing to quick reality the confiscation and sale of the ecclesiastical estates, the nationalisation. The uncertainty of those acquisitions, the precariousness of the sales that might be nullified in a change of government, the civil war whose continuance rendered the rural properties unprofitable and the urban ones burdensome being subject to endless exactions, had utterly depreciated the properties of the clergy; the judgments made according to the law of Lerdo, the ruinous ones made at Veracruz, actual donations since, according to the most optimist calculations, they could not be made effective in many years, had reduced them. The solution of the financial problem, the amortisement of our foreign debt, the system of subventions to communication roads and to colonising enterprises, all that had been dreamt of being effectuated with the fortune of the Church, proved to be a delusion. And as the civil war was going on, and as the exertion of reactionary militarism to quit scores was to be felt everywhere and it was necessary to pay the revolution armies or to beat them, and as it was urgent to fulfil the compromises of the critical days and the taxes produced almost nothing, it was needful to sell at any price, in a hurry and giving one hundred for five; the reformers with an admirable clairvoyance guessed that only in that way the gigantic transfer of dominion premeditated by them could be operated, that only so they would render the same irrevocable, creating around the reformist scheme an unsurmountable rampart of new rights, of rights of private persons who would furiously defend themselves against any attempt at restitution; they guessed right. If the French invasion and monarchy upon the whole only served to consolidate the Reform, it was precisely due to this policy that seemed to be carried out blindly and for show of lavishness. There was something of this, to be sure; all might have been done more orderly, the consequence, however, would have been the same; the present must be sacrificed to the future, the financial solution to the economical solution, and what was believed to be a formidable mass of property happened to be converted into barely six millions devoured beforehand and insufficient to hinder at least bankruptcy. People did not understand that then nor ever afterwards; government had enriched a group of jobbers of whom it afterwards asked alms which they denied. The few million dollars cash produced by the adjudications, had been a molecule lost in the abyss; without the resource of the clergy's estates, government could only march towards ruin by means of loans, ruinous operations and from day to day shifts, because the customs revenue were pawned for their greater part to foreign creditors and for a lesser part to the agio-jobbers; the interior revenue was null being at the disposal of the States; government was living by the income from the Federal district. And meanwhile civil war was recovering larger proportions from day to day and ministerial crises were succeeding one another without improving the situation anyhow; all were dominated by the fatidical word *bankruptcy*, a deficit approximating five millions annually; governing was impossible.

The Congress, composed of very young, very passionate deputies saturated with political exaltation and with dreams of instantaneous social transformation, was divided, almost since the first days of meeting, in two parties keeping each other in equipoise: the Juarists

and Antijuarists. Nevertheless, the presidential election had been made; excepting the reactionary party that, of course, abstained, the people capable to vote in electoral colleges of second degree (system wisely adopted by the Constitution and sole one possible among nations of an illiterate majority) had voted in first term for Lerdo de Tejada (Michael), then for Juarez and lastly for Gonzalez Ortega. In Lerdo the country that had accepted the Reform saw the only man apt to organise the same and to find a solution for the financial problem; in Juarez they beheld a man capable by his character to face the tremendous situations that could be surmised; in Gonzalez Ortega a possible scheme of revolutionary dreams and generous acts. Lerdo having died the majority of votes was for Juarez who was declared constitutional president; a little later on Gonzalez Ortega invested with the presidency of the Supreme Court of Justice became vice-president of the Republic. The antijuarist opposition in the Congress could not hinder, nor was it really willing to do so, the adoption of measures granting the Executive all sorts of faculties to save the situation; things reached so far as to decree, in the month of July «that federal government entered into the dominion and enjoyment of all its revenues and suspended all debt services for two years;» this was the forcible consequence of bankruptcy. And if the foreign creditors had put up with that, it would have been the only possibility of organising finance and pacifying the country. But that assent never came; and thus the financial problem became complicated with an awful international problem.

There were days when the situation of the country acquired an atrocious character, civil war taking an aspect of unutterable rage and exasperation. Within a brief lapse of time the principal leaders of the Reform disappeared, Lerdo de Tejada and Gutierrez Zamora first and then, murdered with that savage cruelty which denounced the presence or proximity of the man who in our contentions most thoroughly personified the implacable homicidal furor of cold fanaticism, Ocampo, Degollado and a youth all hope, smile, enthusiasm and generous valour, Leander Valle, perished, the integrity of Ocampo in face of death and the admirable abnegation of Degollado constituting an everlasting teaching of actual morality for the Mexicans. The reformist party struck in the heart answered death by death and Congress approved fearful laws of proscription and blood; they piously buried their dead and hastened to inculcate government for all that happened. Changes of cabinet were frequent, the discussions in the Chambers tumultuous like those of a meeting in the epoch of Revolution; the new reformist generation had its most vibrating, its most eloquent herald, its most resolutely fierce and wild aspect in Ignatius M. Altamirano, a young poet and tribune of the South and Juarez's presidential cùrle seemed going to crumble through the irreverent shakings of the parliamentary opposition. But meanwhile repression had been better organised and the reactionist forces were nearly constantly beaten, although for a moment they menaced the capital of the Republic and had attempted at calling into existence a wandering government presided over by Felix Zuloaga and obeyed by nobody, although in a fit of energy it dared on a certain occasion to depose Marquez and entrust the Spaniard Cobos with the military direction of the war; more dreadful than Zuloaga's mock armies were the innumerable bands of highwaymen headed by Galvez, Butron, Cajigas, etc., that plundered, killed and sequestered everywhere.

The removal of the impending military peril permitted government and the political

groups and soon the thoughtful nation to look attentively abroad; since some time past a tempest was gathering on our horizon. During our last civil struggle the cabinets of England, Spain and France had become familiarised with the possibility of intervening in our affairs in order to force us to hold our peace, to possess themselves of our resources in order to get paid England for her enormous credits recognised by ourselves, Spain for her discussible rights and France for her insignificant claims; the attitude of the United States had hindered the European nations to pass from their wishes to acts. The repulse of the Mon-Almonte treaty that formulated a tutelage of Spain over Mexico and the expulsion of plenipotentiary Pacheco, the robbery of the funds of the bondholders of the English debt per-



Napoleon III

petrated by moribund reaction, had exacerbated the impatience of London and Madrid governments. But there could not possibly be dreamt of a collective action the views of the two government being incompatible with one another; the British ostensibly inclined to support the reformist elements, the other sympathised with anything tending to reaction and clericalism. There was an intermediary, France; the claims of this nation against Mexico were null; the French in Mexico had drawn immense pecuniary benefits out of the Reform, the Mexicans treated them with affection, there credits were trifles; they suffered the consequences of our poli-

tical situation in the same way as the Mexicans; both fighting parties, but especially the reformist one, got their education in French books and from them they derived their intense aspiration to equalness and their bitter hatred against the privileged; well-bred Mexicans were a hundredfold better versed in the history of France than in that of their own country.

But France was then governed by a man who, under the meek and dreaming appearance of the visionary, was hiding not the will, sign of the great characters, but the secret obstinacy, symptom of the fatalist tempers; he had talent, he had luck; France, victorious and prosperous, exercising a sort of continental hegemony in Europe seemed his work and he passed for a first rate politician; the French came to have faith in his genius and his lucky star and like the French all who were wont to read French in both the old and the new world. This man, Napoleon the third (nobody knows why he was the third, because the second never reigned a single minute) cherished the vague, huge and boundless dream

VOL. I.—PART SECOND

Political history

Benedict Juárez



to succeed in establishing a sort of solidarity among the Latins (not of blood, to be sure, but of spirit) in Europe and America and being the arbiter of that amorphous federacy.

Of course, Mexico was the fulcrum of this lever in America; here it was where the dam must be organised to check the tendency to universal domination of the Anglo-Saxon race. The Mexican emigrants in Europe who represented Mexican society in the same way as the pebbles left on the banks represent a river, guided by one of them who had contrived to insinuate into the intimacy of empress Eugenia's family, endeavoured to saturate Napoleon's domestic atmosphere with data and entreaties making the crowned visionary believe such an enterprise was possible since the Mexican people would thankfully collaborate therein on their knees. The empress wishing to requite by her ardent catholicism the policy of the emperor who willing or unwilling had unchained the unitarist revolution in Italy, entered into the views of the reactionists out of hatred against the persecutors of the Church and as she allowed herself to be called a descendant of Moctezuma she felt an unwonted eagerness to raise a throne in Mexico; for this was the supreme necessity of the country's pacification: monarchy. Things had, indeed, gone such a length that emigrants had hit upon a candidate: archduke Maximilian of Austria. To realise a dream who could be fitter than a dreamer? Napoleon had indolently assented and the Austrian prince had not said no; people were aware he was eager to say yea.

A new personage entered into campaign for his own sake and account; he was none of the Empress's circle nor of her liking, but he had got a great ascendancy over the emperor; it was his brother, the duke of Morny, adulterine son of count Flahaut and Queen Hortensia, a high-flying man of the world, of the type of the great lords at once debauchees and statesmen, never lacking in France, unsatiable gulf of money, pleasure and honours, under the exquisite manners of a very correct, very indifferent and very elegant prince. The duke of



John Prim

Morny had put himself in contact with Jecker and the enormous credit of this banker against Mexico, although false and foolish, appeared to him a mine apt to be turned to benefit by means of a French intervention.

The United States, too, during the whole of Buchanan's administration, had assumed an attitude though favourable to the constitutional government, however manifestly prone to intervene in our affairs and even their offer to assume the responsibility for our foreign debt by means of a hypothec on part of our territory, offer rigidly refused by our government, well pointed out what was their general bent, quite explainable by the state of perpetual civil war wherein we unluckily happened to be. But already in the year 1861 it was clearly to be seen that the United States were a personage obliged to temporally withdraw from our stage and as their mere presence until then had hindered the European intrusion from taking place, this now could get effectuated.

The *secession war*, determined by a coalition of twelve States of the North-American Federacy that decided to part constituting a separate republic, had for its efficient cause an economical and therefore social question, that of fixing the conditions of human labour in the southern regions of the Union. From the South of the Potomac to the North of the Bravo the opinion or rather the dogma was obtaining that without serf labour, without slavery, it was impossible to work the ground lucratively. And this that by posterior facts was proved to be formidable error, was demonstrated, after the opinion of the Southerners, by the tradition issuing from the founders of slavery in those districts, tradition respected and sanctioned by the authors of the Constitution in spite of their humanitarian ideas and by Washington himself. In the dissident States the attitude of the North resolutely hostile to slavery was attributed to merely economical aims; intending to place the South, depriving it of servile labour, into a condition of complete inferiority regarding the North that by its endeavour to become an industrial power exacted protectionist customs tariffs that would kill the conditions favourable to the development of agriculture in the South. The problem of the extinction of slavery in the North-American Union had ascended to be a political problem precisely in consequence of the Mexican war which provoked the passion exciting question of extending slavery to the new States, a question put off by Henry Clay by means of wise and patriotic compromises which in reality proved to be but truces. The government of president Buchanan, head of the democratic party inclined to maintain the constitutional *statu quo* and to grant the rights of the States an exaggerated importance, beheld the tempest forming by the very increase of the anti-slavery ideas in the North and the resolution to resist in the South. After the election of Lincoln, a signalised triumph of the Northerners, Buchanan allowed the meridional States to confederate and to form the secession pact, never trying to quench the nascent rebellion but to bring the contenders to a new compromise. The installation of the new president was the signal for struggle and the year 1861 made the fact stand out very clearly before the eyes of the European cabinets that the civil war, the fighting forces being enormous, would be protracted during many years disabling the United States for any grave foreign enterprise; that this was the opportunity to paralise for ever the expansion and absorption movement of the United States in Latin, and perhaps too in English, America, by efficaciously cooperating in making the scission definitive; this cooperation had its way traced: to support the Southerners by pro-

curing their maritime superiority which they alone manifestly were unable to conquer. This idea and that of Latin hegemony perfectly agreed with one another and got harmonised in Napoleon's brain and as the English thought their interest consisted in detaining for a century at least the industrial development of the Union, all things proved accordant with the emperor's grand schemes.

The suspension of payment decreed by the Mexican Congress and begun by government in July 1861 was the act that occasioned, let us say so, the first crystallisation of the Napoleonic design. Not without certain difficulties, rather of form than of substance, French diplomacy at last succeeded in settling an agreement between England and Spain with France which was formulated in the famous document called «the London Convention» (October 1861). Under the pretext of securing more efficient guarantees for the obligations contracted by the Republic towards the subjects of the pacting nations, it was decided sufficient forces to realise that design should be sent to Mexico, protesting that this recourse to force implied no purpose of acquiring territory or exercising any influence in the Mexican people's right to constitute themselves freely.

Here there was a farce that was rapidly going to become a tragedy because the three contracting parts knew quite well Napoleon had resolved beforehand to carry out in Mexico the installation of a monarchy, this proving the stupendous lack of data with which he proceeded in executing his designs; therefore he never happened to attain more than to utterly complicate the question he pretended to resolve. Spain knew this with a deep uneasiness and interest, being resolved not to oppose the game but cleverly to play for her own profit at the first opportunity; England beheld the project with indifference and scepticism: putting up with everything provided her own interests turned out safe. And just a little while after the London convention had been signed, the English minister stipulated with Mexico an agreement which, had it been approved by our Congress, would have obliged England to withdraw her signature from the Convention.

In Mexico they did not believe in the intervention until in December 1861 it became



Marshal Forey

known the Spaniards and the English had arrived at Veracruz which it was not deemed convenient to defend and so was occupied by the van of that singular occupation army composed of a few English mariners, and French ones soon after and of a few Spanish battalions. Juarez had intrusted the portfolio of foreign Relations to the governor of Guanajuato, Emmanuel Doblado, a man of a talent *ad hoc* to entangle or disentangle at pleasure a political skein and who marked, since his first paces on that ground, our diplomacy's superiority over the European and this superiority never faltered a single instant during the struggle with the intervention; Doblado, de la Fuente, Lerdo de Tejada, by dint of hability, logic and patriotism, maintained before the world the French invasion and the Empire within the iron circle of a fact in conflict with a right; the circle could be widened, it was never broken. Government turned to account against the intervention the inveterate hostility to Spain which existed ever since the colonial times, which had not died out in the people's heart and which the reformist party incessantly put into play in its struggle with the conservative party with which the great majority of the Spaniards lively sympathised. It was not therefrom the instinctive rancour of the popular class derived; that class allowed herself to be led by the parties of both banners, being indifferent to them; both signified exactions, endless vexations, they signified the toll, the excise, the levy, the whip and death. However, in reality the dislike of the masses for all that tended to impair the prestige of catholicism, was counterpoised by their hostility against the Spaniard; we think we already told whence that derived; it was a social, not a historical question; the people ignored the enlightened Spaniard and did not see the highly bounteous and honest Spaniard who would emerge out of the group of those who came here with no more resources than their avidity and the support of their countrymen, because he was hid from their sight by the Spaniard of the *manor* who would look on him with pity but always with contempt, and who fostering his vices contrived to reduce him to the servitude of debt, and by the Spaniard of the *shop* that was no more than a *pawnhouse* where the labourer and the pauper of the town left all they had in exchange for whisky and sometimes for bread, almost never rescuing anything. Impotent to shake off this tutelage which the most eloquent articles of the Constitution had not been able even to commove, they transmuted their impotence into hatred and the fearful outcry of the crowds roused by Hidalgo still found an immense eco in the civic feast half a century later.

This feeling was exalted to paroxysm by government seconded therein by the reformist press and while thus agitating the country it contrived to put itself in contact with the commissaries of the three powers; it was soon noticed that among them the Spanish one predominated: it was John Prim, count of Reus. Our government was quick in understanding this circumstance might be turned to an immense account. Prim, a political adventurer of extraordinary enterprise, had become transformed into a hero during the African war and was a sort of epic divinity for the Catalans his countrymen. His character had the perpetual heroic tension of the conquerors of the xvi century, but like in them, the indefinible ambition that widened its horizon as it was advancing, did not obfuscate a most lively feeling for reality and an amazing political penetration rising to a degree of clairvoyance approaching the gift of prophesying (see Prim's letter to general Salamanca before leaving the Republic (*Mexico through the centuries*, vol. V). Now this champion

Cid after the modern fashion knew the Mexican affairs, belonged to the liberal progressionist party of his country, had censured the behaviour of the Spanish envoys favorable to the reactionists here and by his wife was intimately allied with one of the few families of the Mexican high bourgeoisie (the aristocracy as we rather ridiculously called them here) that had not manifested herself hostile to the reformist movement. In spite of the silent opposition of the French minister, Saligny, who was acquainted with the secret of the French participation in the intervention and with the combinations of M. de Morny and who personified in this lugubrious history one of the frankest cases of diplomatic banditism there is memory of, Prim caused the English commissaries most willingly and the candid French commissary Jurien yielding to reason to march on a road that conducted them directly to put an end to the intervention by means of a treaty with Juarez; there was no other government existing than this, Prim justly affirmed, since the reactionist one was but a sinister group that escorted by a guerrilla wandered from village to village and from murder to murder. This was explicitly acknowledged by Almonte the representative of the Mexican emigrants at the European courts when he came to his country and, rid of England and Spain, caused himself to be proclaimed by a reactionist chieftain *supreme*



Isabella II

Chief of the nation; Zuloaga was the chief and so he declared; one was as much so as the other; Forey brutally swept all this away with the top of his staff.

To treat with Juarez, to arrange with Doblado the preliminaries of a big future pact or rather the conditions on which that pact was to be effectuated (preliminaries of La Soledad) and to conquer the good will and at length the gratitude of the Mexicans who heeded the dignity of their country, was the work of a little while for the count of Reus. In Europe they did not look with friendly eyes on the course steered by the commissaries; but Prim and the English who looked at things close by, straightly pursued their purpose; the arrival of considerable French forces and of the political emigrants made them understand it was necessary to hasten on. Almonte brought the authorisation to push the intervention as far as the establishment of a monarchy; Prim deeming this an act of tragic folly per-

sisted in pushing it towards the full acknowledgment of the reformist situation. He expected all from the conferences at Orizaba; Almonte and Saligny purposed to render them abortive. The insistency of the Mexican government in requesting Almonte and his fellows should be expelled, the intervention pleading a neutral character, gave the French a pretext for breaking off their relations with the government; Prim and the English commissaries then decided to withdraw and thus the European intervention became converted into a French intervention.

Prim's was a patriotic deed; by his conduct he removed from his country for many years to come a great catastrophe, which if he had lived he would have contrived to neutralise when certain fatal unavoidable events came to pass in the Antilles. With his behaviour in Mexico Prim gave an example of chivalrous international probity, of those which the world was not accustomed to behold. In Mexico the effect of this procedure was instantaneously felt: government kept silent in the exposition of its griefs against Spain; the press stopped short in her attacks, the rancour in the popular mind fell asleep. A new Spain had revealed herself before our eyes, and was coming towards us: the Spain of the future. Why has not John Prim a bronze monument in our public avenues, there being a bronze gratefulness to him in this country?

It will always be unjust to hold a whole people responsible for the faults of their rulers; and although it must be confessed the reign of Napoleon III was not an accident but the lasting result of a grave social disease and although, even at the end of his reign, he counted on the suffrages of the majority of the nation because he had given it two of the three things the French like best: order permitting to work and to save and military glory that flatters vanity most (the third is liberty that allows to satisfy the passion for speech); although the bourgeois and the peasant had full faith in the Napoleonic star, there is no doubt but the news the Mexican intervention was now an exclusively French business caused disquiet and surprise in France; it was obviously an adventure and an antipathetic one, ever since its birth; the people's presentiments are infallible. During the struggle of intervention the news of the triumphs could excite passing enthusiasms and cause feverish hallucinations in weak impressionable persons, but public opinion soon went back to uneasiness and final bitterness was the consequence of more than five years of dump dislike.

The great work of the reign of Napoleon III, so he said, was entrusted to the plenipotentiary Dubois de Saligny who acted in accordance with Almonte and disposed at pleasure of the military head of the French expedition, Lorencez; now the first was an arrant rogue who in all this smelled a *job* to forge his fortune with; Almonte (son of great Morelos) was an ambitious fellow who had sought to play the first role in his country, now in one faction, now in the opposite one and whom his personal disillusion had persuaded the happiness of his country could be wrought only by force and submitting her to another great military nation for whom she would be an unconditional instrument; Lorencez was a correct officer of the general type. Between all three they planned the rupture of the Soledad agreements (which Almonte rightly assured would be reproved by the allied governments) and then under an amazingly futile pretext they decided the French (whom

the national government had allowed to come up to the temperate zone while the treaties were adjusting with the explicit condition they would return to the coast if an agreement were not arrived at) should remain masters of Córdoba and Orizaba; so Lorencez's army did not go down to the coast; what was lowered much more, was the honour of his flag he was not worthy to hold in his hands. The Mexican troops before the eyes of Prim were concentrating at Orizaba; seeing them arrive some almost naked and many irregularly armed, the Spanish general choked with emotion compared them with the troops that had fought for the independence of Spain against the other Napoleon, and when informed of the determination of Lorencez the chivalrous paladin went to Veracruz to prepare the reembarkment of the Spanish expedition. The Spanish government approved his conduct; they would have acclaimed it with enthusiasm, had they been able to see clear in the future.

Zaragoza was a young general formed in the reformist war, strong and active like his country men of the northern frontier; he was neither a genial strategist nor acquainted with all the apices of European warfare, but he wonderfully knew the Mexican soldier and the immense coefficient of resistance there was in the same and these were his tactics; and he had a primitive's pure, infinite and simple faith not only in his country's right but in her triumph, and that was his strategy. At the head of the army he had replaced general Uruga (who had studied the European armies in their own countries and had got an unsurmountable distrust in ours) and since he assumed command Zaragoza neither vacillated nor doubted: he spoke not of vanquishing or dying as the despairing generals did, but of vanquishing; he coolly, calculatingly, quietly pledged his word he would triumph; and he proved as good as his word.

He retroceded step by step towards the central plateau, in the last days of April, with a force hardly stronger than the French one that followed him and by a bloody fight forced the giddy steeps of Acultzingo; he reconcentred at Puebla and deciding there to halt he improvised fortifications on the heights that dominate the place and render it indefensible, and waited. On the 5th of May the French attacked just the spots where defence could be most efficient (the small eminences of Guadalupe and Loreto) and after redoubled assaults wherein the temerarious valour and marching and climbing skill proved useless for Lorencez' small numbered but select troops, the French, lessened, bleeding and stunned, returned to their camp and soon after to Orizaba, humbled and furious not against the Mexicans but against Almonte who *motu proprio* (he had prepared himself the supposed movements for his sake at Orizaba and Cordoba), pompously styled himself: «Supreme chief of the Nation.» Certainly president Zuloaga, wandering in the South with a guerrilla commanded by Cobos, had protested against so bold a usurpation; he, Zuloaga, being the actual supreme Chief of the Nation; the French were not long in seeing clear in all that misery.

The Fifth of May, considering the number of the combatants and the merely military result of the action (a retreat in strict order to wait for reinforcements) is no battle of first order nor even of second; it is no Plateau, it is a Marathon. It is a Marathon by its immense moral and political results: the whole nation was vibrating with enthusiasm; we ignore if there were any Mexicans saddened by the triumph; we believe there were none, in any party; neither hatred, nor ambition nor despair could be able to check the beats of any heart moved by Mexican blood. Some kept silent, others were shouting in

every corner throughout the country; there was no hamlet of natives without its lightning of patriotic electricity; that sudden spark brought into contact many consciences that were sleeping for patriotism and all the awake ones. There was a Nation feeling the shock; that Nation felt herself capable of supreme exertions. At that admirable minute of our history the reformist party, then the majority, began to be the political totality, of the country, began its transformation into national entity: the Reform, the Republic and the Country, at that hour of May, started together on the *via crucis* that had to lead them



Count Dubois de Saligny

to identification, to full unification on the indefectible day of the resurrection of right. Outside of this new and definitive personality of the Country there was nothing... erratic atoms, centrifugal relics of our nationality's genetic period.

The Fifth of May, containing the French army for a year, allowed the country to organise resistance; this might be partially vanquished by the evident military superiority of the invaders, but not totally unless an immense army came to occupy the country, and even then only temporally; with the exertion imperial France was able to make a full occupation could not be realised even in outline; it was sure to be a fight decorated with victories, but the result

must needs be an irreparable moral and material waste that would leave the invading nation in a condition of palpable military inferiority in Europe.

The Fifth of May meant the loss of a year for Napoleon's designs regarding the United States clearly hinted in his famous letter to Forey; at the precise moments when Zaragoza defended Puebla, there appeared in the foreground of the secession war Edmund Lee, the genial soldier who was to give that war a scientifically grand character; the Emperor, master of Mexico and momentaneous conqueror of the just then disarmed Republic, would have possessed an admirable fulcrum for an alliance with the Southerners and with the help, doubtless in those moments, of England, would have conquered the ports and rid the communication of the rebel States with the Ocean of maritime hindrances. And this, perhaps, would have been definitive *secession*. On the Fifth of May Zaragoza defended at Puebla the integrity of his Mexican Fatherland and of the North-american Federacy.

An involuntary but inestimable service that other services from the United States (none of them disinterested) could compensate, but never surpass.

After his victory, general Zaragoza, with his army considerably reinforced and having under his command the popular and enthusiastic leader of the last triennial period, Gonzalez Ortega, endeavoured to gather the fruits of the Fifth of May by obliging the French who had fortified themselves in Orizaba to descend to the coast and embark before the arrival of reinforcements. The combination for dominating Orizaba was bold and excellent; the immense fatigue of Gonzalez Ortega's troops, the stupendous imprevision of some officers afforded the French, eager to recover their prestige, an opportunity to surprise a whole wing of our army, to dislodge it from its inexpugnable position (el Borrego) and to frustrate the plan of Zaragoza who abandoned his undertaking upon Orizaba.

The defence fever was invading the whole country; however only the passive mass that constituted the bottom layer of our nationality (mestizoes and indigenes), mass without any spontaneousness owing to three centuries and a half of minority and hard tutelage, let themselves to be led to the army and agglomerated in the barracks; they did not dislike combat, but they were not eager enough to take the initiative; they required the traditional way, the *levy*. With it extortion came in all its forms and all its phases; each State had to resolve its economical and interior military problem, procure security to do the productive work and assure the taxes some real value, a part of which was destined to the federal treasury. There were bands of outlaws pullulating proclaiming all sorts of platforms and hoisting all kinds of flags, from the considerable groups headed by Lozada in Tepic to the sequestrators and highwaymen that multiplied even in the federal district and its environs and that got incessantly renewed at the foot of the gallows where their chieftains hung. Payment of the taxes that were increasing with a vertiginous rapidity as the peril of invasion was drawing nearer and nearer, was resisted by all the bourgeois, even the adjudicataires; certainly taxes were unequal, arbitrary, without a possible base and it was evident that in order to collect one dollar four were waived and it was obvious that in their exactions the agents displayed a luxuriance of vexation and brutality comparable only to that of the Convention agents in the days of jeopardy for the Fatherland; but it is difficult to say if else they would have gathered the money that was spent in fortifying Puebla and Mexico and in bringing to the centre the contingents of the States.

Amid the preparations for defence Zaragoza lost his life; it was the only desertion of the young mestizo from the frontier who in the endearment of the people passed from triumph to apotheosis; out of a hero legend made a god; the Republic tributed him splendid honours: his funeral car was a pyramid of incense, flowers and palms whereon the coffin shone fulgent wrapped in the national banner; propitious death assumed the task of eternalising the laurel of his victory; green and lusciant it still is.

The French invasion was organising at Orizaba under Forey and at Jalapa under Bazaine; reinforcements were incessantly arriving; the convoys frequently disarrayed by the guerrillas were ascending the grades of the central plateau in long, long rows; French squadrons were approaching our ports on both seas and gold was raining down; the officeless militaries of conquered reaction, those who had not availed themselves of the Republic's amnesty, Marquez, a diminute body projecting an enormous shade over the history

of that final period of our great struggles, were moving around the French trying to form Mexican corps against their country: Forey, a mediocre military, frenzied imperialist, a solemnly imbecile, candid and decorative man, had come to direct the movement provided with a letter from Napoleon wherein he spoke of the necessity of setting an *as far as here* to the Anglo-American preponderance in our Continent, of his decision to respect the Mexican people's liberty to constitute itself and to maintain untouched the rights of all who had legally acquired nationalised estates. This purpose was the death sentence of the reactionist party and rendered the intervention useless; this kind of essential contradiction between the decision to respect the Reform and that of undoing the government whose reason of existence the Reform was, sufficed to make the Napoleonic attempt an abortion.

Having secured his communication lines between the central plateau and Veracruz, intrusting the sureness of the roads to a corps of Egyptians hired by Napoleon and to the frightful colonel Dupin and his cosmopolitan counter-guerrilla of knaves and rogues, Forey advanced upon Puebla with more than thirty thousand French soldiers and a group of officers, old relics of the reactionist shipwreck who putting up with daily humiliations and scorns had placed themselves under French pay, like Marquez and his rabble. Puebla was no stronghold; the fortifications had been improvised, chiefly in the vetust and massive religious buildings wherein the Angelo-politan town abounded and which, by the range and force of rifled artillery, were more perilous for their defenders than for the assailants. The army which defended Puebla was a kind of national assembly composed of military contingents deputed by the majority of the federative entities and who rivalised in enthusiasm and bravery. The defence lasting two months was heroic according to the unanimous confessions of the French officers who have made declarations before history; its episodes excite pride and emotion; with them one may form a prayer-book of epic Mexicanism in order to prepare the new generations for the civic communion in Republic and Motherland.

González Ortega, an improvised general, improvident, lavish and pompous, by his lyric ardour communicated this singular event in the history of our wars a most elevated tone of acted poem. Puebla was surrounding with a wall of blood-soaked rubbish and the besieging army, in spite of their admirable intrepidity, at the beginning of May, worried and fidgety, thought of raising the siege; but provisions and ammunitions of the beleaguered were going to end; an auxiliary army, commanded by ex-president Comonfort was slowly and prudently gathering at the back of the French; when the immense convoy that had been prepared was to be introduced into the besieged place, the attempt miscarried and the auxiliary army was defeated and disbanded. Puebla must surrender and the army did so after destroying their arms, having been declared dissolved by the chiefs and summoned to gather elsewhere to carry on the defence of the Country and the whole officiality delivering themselves into the hands of the conqueror, without asking or accepting any guarantees, without contracting any compromise, reserving themselves entirely to perform their duty. This act was analysed and criticised in a thousand fashions; a definitive judgment was pronounced by the French generals who learning the rendition of Metz, exclaimed: "Why did you not do like the Mexicans at Puebla?"

Every exertion had been made to put Mexico in a state of defence; the population had

been inexpressibly illused by the agents of the military authorities to oblige the same to contribute in the defence; they had made a show in carrying on to the utmost the accomplishment of the Reform laws, not in a serene and cool manner as might have been deemed necessary, but with something like brutal ostentation deeply hurting the religious sentiments of the social masses; this was not a very sensible way to manage things. Indeed, in spite of this, the events of the siege of Puebla had raised patriotism to such a heat that the necessity to defend Mexico brought about a unanimous explosion: every one asked for arms; dissensions shamefully kept hid in the shade and people heard like a death knell the news that circulated about Congress closing their sessions, the president and his government leaving Mexico and San Luis Potosí having been declared capital of the Republic. This was an unhappy inspiration; Mexico would have defended itself a month; a month would have been wasted by Forey in coming from Puebla to Mexico and the remainder of the year in reorganising his army, while government concentrated once more in the Interior the elements of the resistance which, of course, were to disperse with its retreat.

The necessity to increase the occupation army day by day, the certainty not to be able to keep a town but occupying it militarily, the immense hum



The duke of Morny

filling the atmosphere of the country that was everywhere resisting, defending, protesting, with the conventicle in the drawing room, the conspiracy in the town and the guerilla everywhere, were characterising the French enterprise; it was an invasion to establish a protectorate according to a formula beforehand agreed upon; it was no arbitration betwixt contending parties, it was no intervention.

In order to receive the invaders in Puebla, in Mexico, the clergy dressed in gala and with the faltering voices of their decrepit dignitaries intoned trembling and impious *Te-Deums*; the God whom the clergy invoked, was going to punish them, was going to oblige them in the midst of the blessed and incensed intervention, to sigh after Juarez. When it became known the French were approaching Mexico, there came forth into the streets,

nobody knows whence, some groups of people with their clothes worn-out and saturated with a disheartening scent of hovel, of vestry, of fusty archives; they were the ex-officials of the reactionist government, they were the *conservative party*; three years had not passed since those men pullulated in the churches and ministries and, nevertheless, they made the impression of spectres; they seemed apparitions from another century, they were phantoms that under the disdainful eyes of battalions of foreigners armed to take care of urban security, met in the hall of a public building to throw themselves at the bosom of France and sleep in the arms of Forey.

This general penetrated into the capital with his picturesque and gallant army, at the sound of their gay and sonorous fanfares, preceded by Marquez's funeral army, in June 1863. Thousands of curious people, very silent, very interested in not missing one of the motley scenes of the great tragedy all were guessing, accumulated in the streets, whistling and clandestinely dissolving the *hurras* organised by police in the wards with two or three hundred street-arabs and sacristans. The balconies beheld, also silent nearly all, although most of them decked by special order; now and then a group of *mochos* (tories), as the people said, shouted and agitated their handkerchiefs at some rich house; some *catrines* (dandies), as people called them, tried to stir up that reception and to bring about something like an ovation that came to nothing under pushes; and old Forey, momentous and massive liken an *imperator* of the Roman decadence, believed the whole nation had gratefully knelt down before him; the garlands and flowers manufactured by the ladies and the police to be thrown at the feet of the horse of him who went to Mexico *not to destroy like Cortés but to build up* as he said in his pompous proclamations, blinded the future marshal; for him there were no more parties; the nation had become reconciled hearing the army defiling before the Palace shout: *Vive l'Empereur!* and in his enthusiasm he told the Mexicans: «The owners of national lands will continue in the possession of their estates;» «the Emperor will be pleased to see the liberty of worship proclaimed.» The ecclesiastical chapter's *hosannas* ended with a stammering of surprise and anger. It was therefor the Intervention came? Of course, for this it came; to render the Reform definitive and perennial.

The minister of France, the famous Saligny, nominated a governing committee composed of rank conservatives who named an executive triumvirate composed of the head of the clergy, an exile who ignored his country and a military man whosoever ignored by his country (the archbishop of Mexico, Almonte and Salas). After that and the proclamations of a catholic purport, seeming counter-proclamations in front of Forey's, an assembly of *notables* was nominated like those formerly named by Santa Anna and Paredes. After the death of Alaman the reactionist party's statesmen were Lares and Aguilar y Marocho; they with Almonte were the soul of the *Assembly of notables*. Wishes of annexation to France became loud, but the idea prevailed of proclaiming monarchy and the watch-word being to choose archduke Ferdinand Maximilian whom almost nobody knew and who had been invented by Hidalgo, adopted by Gutierrez Estrada and accepted by Napoleon, that unfortunate prince was voted. Who would have told those two hundred bourgeois who were nearly the whole reactionist party of Mexico, that they constituted a terrible tribunal pronouncing a death sentence with the unconsciousness of fatality!

Monarchy in Mexico! To the whole *report* presented to the assembly of notables by

Aguilar y Marcho, an intelligent and honest man in whom an implacable and cold fanaticism combined with a vast culture and a poignant humorism to form a strange amalgam, to all his laborious study that seemed meant to resuscitate the colonial regime rather than to defend royalty, we may oppose in order to dissolve it instantaneously in the face of history, another report presented to Santa Anna by the most conscientious leaders of the conservative party, being the work of the eminent juriconsult Bernard Couto. We literally excerpt therefrom the following conceptions: "To the undersigned it seems beyond all controversy that Mexico cannot be anything else than a republic: her present circumstances and those always existing ever since the fall of liberator Iturbide; the universal and constant opinion that now obtains and always has obtained among us about this subject; the complete absence of constitutive elements for any other form of government; lastly, even the state of the nations that surround us, all things are convergent to make the republican form of organisation the only one possible in Mexico (July 1855).

This was the sensible, the just, the certain view; the notables imagined, under the protection of the emperor of the French who fascinated them, the social, political and mental order in Mexico would become inverted; in their amazement they believed in the possibility of an empire; nearly all of them let themselves be inspired by their hurt religious sentiments and thought Forey in spite of his proclamation was a Godfrey of Bouillon and his army a crusade. There was nothing more ephemeral and fictitious than all that.



Marshal Bazaine

The outcome of the assembly of notables was monarchy and a regency composed of Messrs. Almonte, Salas and Labastida; a commission was sent to offer Napoleon a vote of thanks and Maximilian the imperial crown. From the first moments people saw clear in that gigantic comedy: there was no disinterested intervention of France between the parties, there was a brutal fact: the invasion of the country seconded by the remnants of a party absolutely impotent to obtrude on the Nation and ready to be an instrument in the hands of the invaders who began frustrating the ideals and annulling the right of existence of that

party. The aim of that invasion was to convert the insignificant credit of France against Mexico into an enormous sum by the Jecker debt and the expenses of war, an insolvable sum, that should maintain the new empire under the forcible tutelage of France and permit the French to turn the riches of the invaded soil to profit and to possess themselves of a part of the territory (Sonora). There had not been any votation on behalf of monarchy; that of the assembly of notables (they were so privately, not for the Nation utterly ignoring them and with which they had no contact whatever) had been agreed upon beforehand in the Tuileries; it did not exist. Wishing to give the French legislative body clamouring against the establishment here of a government not suffrage-born no footing for opposition, Napoleon ordered the head of the French expedition to see that the town councils named by the French in the towns they were occupying should express their votes *freely*; people knew quite well what sort of colossal farce was to come out of that *instruction*. There was nothing; nothing else but this truth: the invasion was resuscitating the dead reactionist party giving it arms and facilitating its endeavour to domineer the country anew, a thing that was neither viable nor wanted by Napoleon. As for the North-American question, it was already resolved; the year lost after the Fifth of May, the formidable difficulty to dominate the defeated but not conquered country, had hindered France from helping the Southerners and allowed the Federals to gain the upperhand to such a degree that the resistance of the South, for all who saw clear was but a question of time, the triumph of the North being certain; this was going fearfully to complicate the problem Napoleon thought he had resolved with an army and a letter. The result of all this was an undecipherable entanglement.

The sheer truth was this: the government begotten by the invading army in the defeat of the Republic was still-born, was contradictory with itself; it was no national government because it depended exclusively and totally on a foreign army, and styled itself sovereign! It was no party government, because its words were reactionary and its acts were squared on Forey's manifesto wherein he declared nationalisation was sacred and religious liberty would be welcomed by his master. Honest bishop Ormachea ventured to protest; he was not heeded. Forey's manifesto was the constitution of the Mexican empire; but it was rendered dim, uncertain and utterly impotent by the circumstance that Napoleon, enlightened by the letters of the French officers and by the increasing intensity of the resistance in the first year, showed his wish to treat, to withdraw, to give the enterprise up and took the *national will* expressed by the Assembly of notables as a *mere indication* of the opinion of the country, as the opinion of the capital. Forey, named marshal, and Saligny who with the secret aims of jobbers had steered the whole policy of the French in Mexico, were imperiously called to France and this frightened the reactionists. However they were aware France could not possibly retrocede and the inflexible logics of her first mistake must lead her to attempt the conquest of the country beforehand declared impossible by Forey.

After the withdrawal of Forey Bazaine was intrusted with the command of the French army and the great operations were begun in winter 1863. Up to then the invaders had limited themselves to dominate an important sector of the coasts of the Gulf, the zone of ascent from the warm region to the central plateau, the road between Puebla and Mexico, and a slowly dilating band around the capital. In all this occupied region the invaders manifested from the beginning what means they meant to employ until the end: disarming

the resistance by terror, pacifying through death, cleaning roads and towns with blood; military justice took charge of all this programme as though there were no Mexican government existing and it was a frightfully accelerated justice: mere suspicions, the fact of having been a guerrillero or a friend to one, the physiognomy, a vague accusation generally very little understood by people not speaking a Spanish word, was enough to bring on death. It was the system of the anti-albigenses crusaders: kill them all, God will know his own, the chieftains said; so it was here; certainly, among every hundred executed people there were thirty three per cent of banditti; that sufficed to justify the courts-martial: at the eyes of whom? of human conscience? of divine justice? The system of the whip, frequently applied to dissenters in the towns, that of infinite vexations in the homes of the *liberals* specially in the form of lodgings for soldiers, something similar to the «*Dragonnades*» of Louvois were the supreme advantages the invasion brought the *distinguished* so-



Maximilian and Charlotte

ciety of Mexico; society submitted to everything; it was trembling with fear or with pleasure at the balls it was regaled with by the French officers whom maids and matrons found very elegant and sympathetic even in their brutality; they were not all dukes nor all *gentlemen*, but they were Frenchmen!

The winter campaign of 1863 to 1864 was swift and mortal for the lawful government. The French army by itself or supporting the disloyal groups that, as it nearly always happened in invaded countries, had been able to organise and which were humbled but armed and perfectly paid, succeeded in dominating all the central plateau, occupying all the important towns of the interior; the republican army, mutilated, bleeding, cut up in fragments by a rapid disorganisation, took refuge in the mountains of Michoacan, Jalisco, Zacatecas or retired, almost dissolved, over the large slopes of the northern tableland: the republican generals on whom most hopes were set, and Juarez and his government, nucleus and centre of the national resistance that without them would have disappeared, found themselves morally threatened by the petitions of some republican leaders requesting Juarez should give up the presidency this being the only possible solution to the conflict with France,

and materially menaced with death by Vidaurri in Coahuila and New Leon. The only thing inspiring animation and lending life to the death struck republican cause was the great soul of Juarez, his stoical serenity, the unshaken firmness of his faith, but not of the blind faith of the submissive men of his race, but of the clear-sighted faith of those of his race who rise to civilisation and to free consciousness. That man weighed all the difficulties, analysed with an amazing political shrewdness the conditions of the present and demonstrated the indefectible transformation of these conditions in the future. That man never doubted nor was mistaken. All was mutilated, lessened, diminished, in the nation; he alone remained intact; in him the Republic continued unharmed.

Whilst the French, victorious and terrible, pervaded the country incessantly vanquishing and pitilessly executing the republicans in just the same manner as Santa Anna, Marquez, Miramon and their like, in the capital they vanquished the reactionist party that had no other right to exist than their clericalism, than their attachment to Church, not being reformist because it was catholic. The government, framed by the French army like a kind of political agency or office and named *Regency of the Empire*, endeavouring to realise Forey's manifesto in the part referring to the nationalised estates, the bishops guided by the supreme hierarch of the Mexican Church, intelligent and warlike Labastida, protested, the supreme tribunal refused to walk on the path pointed out by the Regency and out of all this there issued a sort of coup d'Etat: the archbishop ceased forming part of the Regency, the supreme tribunal was dissolved and keeping time with the struggle the contenders made their confession before history; the episcopate stated: the defence of the Church's interests was the only claim for existence of the reactionist party author of the intervention, the conditions of the Church were better in times of the Republic. The intervention said the *desiderata* of the clerical party belonged to the past and would never come back; that party was *minimal* in the country. The cause of the Republic wanted no more defence before reason and history.

Prince Maximilian, brother to the emperor of Austria, eventual heir to the Empire, ephemeral candidate to the throne of Greece, married to the daughter of the most respected of European kings for the superiority of his character and his scrupulous constitutionalism and of a princess of the Orleans family whence her secret hatred against Napoleon and her devotion to the French army derived, had accepted the throne ever since it was offered him at the very beginning of the intervention although he feigned a resolution not to accept it but under certain conditions; to the commission that went to Miramar castle to offer him the crown of Mexico in the name of the Nation represented by its notables, he answered the vote of the notables *was the vote of the capital*, an immense scorn smilingly and humbly undergone by the Mexican commission; the prince expected a plebiscite manifesting clearly the vote of the nation and not difficult to obtain for the French occupation army. The unfortunate victim chosen by the emigrants as being the candidate that would rouse less objections at the Courts, had been an almost popular ruler of Lombardy under Austrian domination; as an *attitude* rather than by conviction he manifested liberal ideas disagreeable to his brother, whenever he had an opportunity; his brother therefore was pleased to see him depart from Europe. Napoleon aware of the anti-clerical ideas inspired or consolidated in Maximilian by his wife, princess Charlotte, who adored and admired her protestant father,

and of the weakness of his character, supposed the new emperor would be a mere instrument in his hands, simply an agent of the intervention; Charlotte who to be sure induced him to accept, was a proud woman who scorned and abhorred any secondary role but who loved her husband and was ambitious for both of them; being excessively intelligent and nervous her mind acquired so deep an excitability, since the beginning of the terrible Mexican adventure, that her final dementia was but the result of four years of neuro-psychic tension.

Maximilian was in the strict acceptation of the word an adventurer, a man born for adventures and who was not afraid of temerary enterprises if at the end of them he surmised a big result in accordance with his ambition; he was a younger son as were most adventurers who dreamt of acting a first part; he sought it in Austria in the world of ideas and therefore he was a liberal like his father in law; Mexico was something unknown, it was an intact clay, although maculated by the civil wars, wherewith he meant to make a people after his image: he felt himself endowed thereto with valour, with enthusiasm, with inspiration, with the divine gift of ruling. But what he was going to do was a novel which destiny transmuted into a tragedy; for he was neither a politician, nor an administrator nor a soldier; he was a dreamer, an artist all his life and all his inclinations denote him so; he was a poet; his practical sense was Charlotte; he saw in all the theatrical stroke, the decoration; he was always thinking of the stage. Excessively compassionate but (this is perfectly verified) endowed with a fundamental duplicity, he was not scrupulous in cheating. When one analyses the life of Maximilian, there comes up in one's memory the brief psychology of Charles I traced by Macaulay: «It would be unjust to deny this prince some of the qualities of a good, of a great prince; he wrote and spoke like the intelligent and well bred cavaliers, his taste in literature and art was excellent, his manners dignified, although not graceful, his domestic life reproachless. Faithlessness was the chief cause of his misfortunes and is the principal stain on his memory; he certainly was impelled thereto by an incurable propensity towards the obscure and the tortuous. It



Peter Escudero y Echanove

will seem strange that a conscience which on occasions of little moment was sufficiently delicate should not reproach him so great a defect.»

While he was receiving from the towns dominated by the invasion as many portfolios crammed with the protocols of the *plebiscite* Maximilian agreed with his brother his complete renouncement to the imperial throne of Austria for himself and his descendants unless the whole archducal race should become extinguished, this renouncement giving rise to disagreeable scenes and not being made without mental reservations; he visited the European courts and received encouraging phrases from Napoleon who had already stated that «the expedition to Mexico was the most brilliant page of his reign» and told Maximilian when he promised him the help of France while he would remain in Mexico: «I give you a throne upon a heap of gold.» Besides, a treaty with secret stipulations and a loan utterly onerous for the new empire were settled. Maximilian after receiving the benediction of Pius IX and his promise to send a plenipotentiary for immediate settling of the ecclesiastical question, departed for Mexico leaving the reactionists who had invented a throne for him content, despised and deceived. After the painful and solemn ceremonies of the renunciation and coronation he seemed to fathom the abyss into which he was going to plunge his youth and his life and the three days of solitude during which he refused to see anybody, the poet sighed out this lamentation:

For ever with my country I must part,
the sky of my sweet first rejoicings;
the holy ties, now rent, I must abandon
I once was bound with to my golden cradle!
The land where of my childhood laughed the years
and of first love the infinite anxiety I felt,
I now am leaving by the ambition driven
that your endeavours in my heart have roused.
You with a throne for lure want to entice me,
to fascinate me showing mad chimeras.
Must I to sirens sweet songs listen?
Unhappy who in sirens' songs confides.
You speak to me of golden sceptres, castles, power,
you open to my eyes an endless path.
I am to follow you beyond the Ocean.
to the far shores of an ignored world!
You want to weave with golden threads and diamonds
my silent life's already weaken'd warp.
But can you give me in return the peace of soul
or do you think in gold and pow'r is happiness implied?
Oh, let me listless walk my darksome path;
in peace, among the myrtles, let me joyful go:
far sweeter science and the Muses' worship is for me
than all the gold your diadem is glaring with.

The frigate *Novara* brought him to Veracruz: during the voyage he busied himself with writing an economical government regulation (we possess the original) and he arrived

very content; the population received him with curiosity, the conservatives most rejoicingly under the cold and mocking looks of the people; the French officers and the lieutenant of the Empire, John Almonte, offered him their homage. The prince passed rapidly, greeting much with his high grey hat that became popular, and showing his long fair beard artistically curled and divided under the low chin and the sick mouth; his tallness, his benevolent and clear look, were much liked; he was a sympathetic man in the word's widest meaning and the crowds felt that electricity. Charlotte, very tall, very rigid, with an intelligent and piercing look, appeared manlier than her husband; she was not sympathetic; she was an intellectual woman, her husband was a sentimental man. Córdoba, Orizaba, Puebla, were the links of an endless chain of ovations; the stupendous curiosity, the wish to applaud what is pleasing to the eyes, a certain impulse to behave well before a foreign prince, the devotion of the indigenous multitudes still living at a century's distance from the conquest and for whom *to see a king* was a marvel, all this bestowed an extraordinary expression on those drawing-rooms where the *high class* directed and arranged all with so ingenuous and so vulgar an adhesion that history before it unwrinkles her severe face and forgets that the notion of Fatherland was lost in those consciences trusting in the miracle of concord, oblivion and peace that fair-haired man was going to realise.

At Mexico the spectacle was a superb one; the town council spent all their funds in costly archs and hangings; the whole town took part in the feast. The aristocracy decking herself with a challenging and delicious enthusiasm, deputed a great lady to go and read for the empress an actual speech (work of Mr. Arango y Escandon) being a programme of religious policy; the mob into which police had poured a dose of extraordinary delirium in the pulque houses shouted frantically; the middle class, cool, observing, shy, thought that opera would not last long. About a hundred students we were who cried out with all our might, on the principal square: *mueran los mochos* (down with the shorn), without anybody reclaiming us. All was lost in an immense noise of human clamour, peal of bell, report of cannon, music...

Month after month passed by; the measures taken by the emperor were null or of little moment; he seemed to recollect himself, to meditate, to study; among his acts we may state the following: suspension of the blockade of the Mexican coasts by which he rather disorganised the plot of the French navy; nomination of a moderate liberal for his minister of foreign relations. The courteous exclusion from all political direction of Almonte and of Gutierrez Estrada, that absolutely antique and chivalric type of devotion to an ideal of descent and sepulchre, caused a strong impression: one of them was the author of the French intervention and the other had introduced the candidature of Maximilian. He also projected many regulations and many useless expenses; adding thereto the swift disappearance of the ten millions that out of the French loan had remained at the disposal of the Empire we get summed up the official life of the monarchy... What was Maximilian doing? Was he recollecting himself, was he studying, was he meditating?

Nevertheless, the imperial government's situation, comparatively with the national government's, was incomparably better; the former counted with the anxious but close adhesion of the majority of the well off classes that more than their country regarded their

religious creeds, their positive interests or their puerile vanities; with the indifference of the crowd serving indistinctly the ones and the others, with the disaggregation of the reformist party that was gradually acknowledging a new centre of gravity, other than the hardly felt and almost forgotten government of Juarez, and with the immense military superiority afforded by the French army; the wandering national government, withdrawing, almost fleeing northward, pressed hard by the French columns; the excentric States Yucatan, Campeachy, Tabasco, Chiapas, dominated or about to be so; the firm and solid nucleus of resistance slowly organised in Oaxaca by the most serious of the young republican chieftains, general Diaz, awaiting alone the formidable storm drawing nearer and



Joseph Maria Lacunza

nearer over his head; the main republican army on the point to get dissolved in the West by the defection of its general in chief, Uraga, and saved from shame and dissolution by the simple and pure patriotism of Arteaga, who in that formidable crisis when receiving from Juarez the commandership in chief of the headless army, harangued them with the following words: «To accept power I consulted not my vanity but my self-abnegation, purposing to sacrifice my person on the altar of your future. The epoch is ill starred, but, I pledge my honour, I never shall permit not only depredations, but not even sterile sacrifices.

If the Republic were all under

my spirit, in this very moment a universal insurrection would break out; but I perfectly understand those surprises the human mind suffers by whole societies and in which they need time to breathe. Silence is no acquiescence, because when reaction comes on it is like a torrent of fire that scorches all; therefore I expect much from you and very soon; but while waiting for your day you may be sure this army forming your vanguard, will keep the sacred fire of independence glowing.» These words spoken at the hour of the Republic's death struggle, at the head of a disorganised, naked, hungry army, surrounded with all sorts of defections, with every kind of treason, at the sight of an approaching spout of routs, extermination and death, are of the loftiest, of the greatest ever heard in the history of mankind.

Three months after his arrival, having had the field opened and cleared for him by thirty thousand French and twenty thousand disloyal troops, Maximilian was able to start

for a triumphal journey through the interior; all the lukewarm turned towards him, all that had lost their hopes approached him: all who approached him, were enticed by his liberalism, by his smiling benevolence. He celebrated the 16th of September at Dolores doing so profound a homage to the fathers of the fatherland that many a good Mexican was fascinated...

He returned to Mexico and under the anti-french influence of his secretary Eloin he found himself placed before the problem impossible to be resolved: was he a mock-emperor? was he or Marshal Bazaine governing? who was the monarch, Maximilian or Napoleon? could this last? was there any means of transforming that ominous situation? was the absolute military supremacy of France compatible with a free government?

The solution of the imperial problem appeared to be this: leaning the empire on a new party strong enough to render the French occupation useless. What elements were to form this party? The prince had been observing and meditating; in his opinion, and he was quite right, there were no vital political elements in the country besides the reformist group. The nominations of Ramirez and then of a sensible and intelligent moderate, Escudero y Echanove, and of a radical, Cortés Esparza, to



General Douay

compose the new cabinet; the presidency over the State Counsel bestowed on Mr. Lacunza and the calling of a group of young liberals and exalted reformists to form a part of that Counsel, were the clear signal of the new orientation.

Why did those good republicans and honest and talented reformists lend the empire their adhesion? They had got their education of lawyers, of engineers, of statesmen in France or in French books; being mentally good Frenchmen, their faith in the philosophical infallibility of France and in the immortality of the military power of France was immense; and being good actual Frenchmen their blind trust in the talent and authority of Napoleon was up to that of nearly all the European statesmen of those days. Their minds being so disposed they thought the Republic of Juarez was dead or if it might revive it would solely be by the direct action of the United States and from this idea that frigh-

tened them deeply they deduced the necessity of accepting the situation with the aim of saving out of the shipwreck of the Republic the Reform in the first place, the Reform at any rate; Maximilian was resolved to do this; it was necessary to help him. The Reform once saved it would be convenient to put an end to the necessity of the French occupation. To attain this aim the consolidation of the empire was indispensable and Maximilian was eloquent in demonstrating this necessity for them. And not one of them (all were well acquainted with the history of their country) believing in the possibility for monarchy to last, they reserved until after the end of the intervention a national arrangement apt to bring about the resurrection of the Republic on broad definitive bases and Maximilian was perfectly accordant about this scheme; he, too, believed in monarchy only as a provisional system of government. To all these circumstances we must add the personal ascendant the prince exercised on his interlocutors. This is the rational explanation why a good deal of the reformist party became agglutinated around the throne, it is a similar phenomenon as that happened regarding the revolutionists and Napoleon at the beginning of the century.

The present writer, by most personal reasons, feels sorry to avow that, when the conduct of those who were so mistaken is compared with the behaviour of those who resisted all allurements, exposed themselves to all jeopardies and underwent all sacrifices merely remaining faithful to their flag and their political religion, this proves morally as superior over that as in the intellectual order of things truth is regarding error.

The events came to confirm in their purposes all who had contributed to the formation of the liberal empire, of the «democratic monarchy» as Maximilian would say. Victory, with her wings, alas, soaked in Mexican blood, widened nearly throughout the whole extent of the country the sphere of action of the empire; after the loss of Tamaulipas martyred by Dupin with his vandalic hords, of Coahuila and New Leon whence Juarez and his government retired; the army that served the wandering president as an ægis being undone in a sad battle at Majoma, Arteaga's force being routed in the South of Jalisco and the resistance there and in Michoacan apparently extinguished, the last great bulwark of the armed Republic being conquered in Oaxaca by the pressure of the French divisions on the morally nearly dissolved republican group rather than by the effect of the combats, the year 1865 seemed to be that of the consolidation of the empire and the forcible end of the intervention which the reformist functionaries hostilised as much as they could, perhaps with lacking judiciousness. And keeping time with these signalised triumphs the emperor went on developping his reformist scheme; there was an agreement with Napoleon to do so, but such a promise was not needed to impel him; Maximilian, we already stated, was reputed a liberal and even affiliated in freemason lodges rather disinclined to favour the preponderance of the Church; the reactionists, albeit, expected him to come to an agreement with the Pope and supposed, nothing would be done but according to a concordat; only an old uncompromising veteran of the clerical revolts, father Miranda, was not to be deceived: Maximilian is worse than Juarez, he would say. Inflexible Pius IX, under the unwise influence of the Mexican bishops found the means to precipitate all, sending the emperor a Nuncio without any faculties to compromise regarding the nationalisation of the ecclesiastical estates and with a list of exigencies that placed the new Empire in a much inferior condition in front of the Church than the viceroys had been; Maximilian took a resolute

attitude unanimously applauded both by the reformists and the French; after a brief and strenuous diplomatic contention with the Nuncio he declared he had the same right to exercise ecclesiastical patronage as the Spanish kings, that the catholic religion was that of the State but that other cults would be tolerated amply and frankly and he entrusted the Counsel of State with the revision of all the operations of amortisement and nationalisation effectuated since 1856, in order to invalidate the illegal ones. This being the definitive sanction of the Reform, although it deeply disquieted the adjudicataires as the empress sensibly remarked, was the death sentence on the reactionist party. Not deeming themselves capable to hinder by themselves the Reform to be carried through, they had applied for help to France and had radically transformed the institutions of the country at the cost of streams of Mexican blood. Both France and the empire, in accordance with each other, had declared the Reform legally achieved; it would never be possible to retrocede behind it; the Nation had settled it in half a century of incessant struggles, the intervention consolidated it fully acknowledging its identification with the necessities and interest of the Mexican people; it was, indeed, the forcible corollary of the independence, as, in social regard, it was the end of the colonial regime.



Antony Rosales

The party that struggled with Revolution since this began in Spain in 1813, perhaps since before that time, since the epoch of Charles III; that which in Mexico was at first colonial, uncompromising conservative afterwards, then constitutional conservative and, when the reformist party definitively conquered power, at the rear of the American invasion that showed the intimate dissolution of the clergy and the army, absolute reactionist, that party ended its political life in our country's history; the death germ it was carrying in its incompatibility with its century's atmosphere, produced its last result: that party dropped dead for ever at the feet of the man it almost had divinised in spite of remarking with surprise that at the top of his crown there was no cross but a pine apple, the symbolical fruit of tropical riches. The immense error of the political entity that was dying consisted

in believing that the social mass being catholic in Mexico, would consent in making catholicism an instrument of political domination; as long as the Reform would respect the liberty of conscience and abstain from meddling with the dogma or the sanctuary, the remainder might not be indifferent, but was resolutely postponed to peace and the termination of the civil wars. This the reactionists never contrived to see and therefore they deserved that, when they fell mortally wounded beyond the wall of treason of the fatherland, the man they expected a miracle from was to give them the finishing stroke.

But when the reactionists died they dragged along with them him who at one time was their executioner and their victim. For then the stupendous absurdity of the intervention and the empire became apparent; this regime had been invented in order to stop the civil war and it had killed more, burnt more and heaped more ruins in three years of war than the combatants of the intestine discords had done in half a century; it had been invented with the aim of creating a public finance that might be responsible to Europe for the debt contracted with her and this debt had increased to a vertiginous sum and Napoleon insisted on seizing in pledge, not in payment, the monopoly of exploiting Sonora; it had been invented to succour a true national party, as though a foreign army had ever served this purpose and Maximilian tried to form that party precisely in order to get rid of that army. Now that party was already formed with a military group unable to maintain themselves masters of the country as soon as the French retired; with the majority of the landowners more and more incredulous regarding the consolidation of the empire; with the reformists who had changed not their flag but their eagle; this group was not one of action nor had it any roots among the masses whence armies and triumphs spring up; it served for legislating, it was useless for fighting; such was the new party, the imperialist party; many a reactionist remained therein by the habit of submission, by monarchical fanaticism, by a profound personal adhesion to Maximilian.

Then it became known that the secession war in the United States which people thought might be prolonged for one or two years more, had ended with the surrender of Lee, of Johnston, the taking of Richmond and the capture of the rebel president; the news arrived that Lincoln had been impiously murdered, but that he who entered in his stead into presidency was, as much or even more than the great martyr president, a most active friend of the republicans in Mexico and little perspicacy was needed to see the supreme difficulty springing up; somebody said that when Maximilian learned the news of the end of the secession war he exclaimed: «It is the end of the empire.»

It was the end of the empire; for if the worn-out, disarmed, annihilated resistance almost obliged France to maintain an army in Mexico, what would happen in the case of a war with the United States having at that moment hundreds of thousands of men under arms? Where was France to find resources to face such an emergency when she needed all her forces in Europe where the disorganisation of the old German confederation was already threatening with one of the most fearful and bloody crises of the century? But for the European complication, France would not have feared a war with the United States being sure to have England for an ally; but with that complication in sight every thing appeared utterly difficult, indeed impossible.

The year 1865 having begun with the pacification of the centre of the country, with

the adhesion to the empire of all who believed in its consolidation, of all who placed the guarantee of their material interests above their country's interest, of all blinded by the military prestige of France and the fear of an American intervention, was the year of probation; it resulted proven, in the climax of triumph and strength, that empire was impossible. The resistance, persistent in every corner of the country and not to be dominated by thousands of executions, on a sudden, in Michoacan, in Sonora and Sinaloa, in the East of the North frontier, acquired the proportions of a conflagration that was suffocated only in appearance with new blood, with new expenses. At the middle of the year things presented the following aspect: the country continued being inundated with guerrillas, the splintered resistance holding their own everywhere, public spirit reorganising and growing gigantic; the ex-reactionists discontent although linked to the empire; the interests created by the Reform eagerly opposed to the general revision; the land-owners, quickly passing from distrust to feeling sure France would not accomplish her work, endeavouring to escape from the ruinous house of Maximilian and the party of action enlisting to return to struggle nearly always relying on the benevolent tolerance of the authorities nominated by the reformist ministers of the empire.



Michael Miramon

General Douay, the most respectable of the French officers sent to Mexico, summed up the situation in the following terms: «The political organisation established by the imperial government, up to this day, has not produced any result. The quiet reigning in some departments is but seeming and due only to the French occupation. The sincere partisans of the government are very few. In the present state of minds it is useless to expect help from anybody to whatever party he may belong.» (August 1865).

Maximilian must be content with being a decorative emperor, an emperor making laws, codes, speeches and decreeing decorations and feasts; he continued his reformist work and in the instructions he gave the commission intrusted with the negotiation of a concordat

with the Pope this was expected to sanction the whole Reform, the suppression of privileges, the secularisation of civil state, etc. His endeavour to manifest his gratitude to the indigenes whose passive adhesion to their parsons and all who offered them redemption from the taxes and the levy was mistaken by Maximilian for adhesion to his person, led him to *state socialism* inducing him to decree the redemption of the farm serfs, the labourers, by a law unhappily impossible to be carried into effect but animated with an admirable spirit of equity. In all the remainder he was a mere pupil of Bazaine, this being the master of the army and the master of the treasury (which it had been impossible to organise in spite of the financiers sent from France) as the empire had ever and anon recourse to the French treasury in order to live, not having any other hope but the produce of the French loans contracted under fearfully onerous conditions and which would have killed the empire by starvation if the Republic had not killed it with the rifle, the tutor incessantly requested Maximilian to economise, to organise an army because the retreat of the French one was approaching and to change his government which Bazaine deemed profoundly hostile to the French and therein he was not wrong. This *maire du palais* of the poor *fainéant* emperor acted by Napoleon's express orders, but these orders were executed by him in such a spirit that the Mexican monarch's humiliation was beyond limit.

France endeavouring to obtain from the United States the acknowledgment of the empire before retiring, a French column scared the national government away from Chihuahua obliging it to settle on the frontier (Paso del Norte) with the aim to show at Washington there was no republican government, and Bazaine stating the disappearance of Juarez from the national territory as certain, obliged, it may be said, Maximilian to issue the famous Draconian law as he himself styled it, of October 3^d, which iniquitously applied in Michoacan, made its first victims in Arteaga, a pur Spartan, and his heroic companions; in that way the incurable illusionist of Miramar thought he was laying the ground for an agreement with Juarez that was his obsession.

Juarez who surmounting immense difficulties had contrived to keep contact with all the republican leaders of the country, reached the end of his constitutional term in the last months of 1865; his almighty faculties could not go so far as to legally prolongate what had no legal existence, the month of November once terminated, whatever might be the legal and personal deficiencies of the vice-president of the Republic (Gonzalez Ortega, president of the Court of Justice, who dwelled in the United States). The moments were critical ones, the separation of Juarez was equivalent to breaking up the nucleus of the resistance; it was the suicide of the Republic; so the president departed from the law and entered on the right; he sacrificed the Constitution to the fatherland and he did well; the large majority of the republicans applauded this act of energy that transmuted the president into a dictator in the name of the Republic's most sacred interests.

The following are the general facts controlling and directing the situation at the beginning of 1866: 1st The incompressible and increasing moral resistance of the majority of society to the regime outcome of the French invasion that to many appeared as a solution and that proved a complication for all; the indomitable ever growing armed resistance of the majority of the men of action, resistance that had survived a programme of a truly

terrific repression carried out by the invaders and that sprang up, more hardened and vigorous than ever, from the peripheral States of the country. ²⁴ The attitude of the United States: the triumphant army demanded war against France in Mexico; general Grant sustained the necessity of bringing the Republic immediate relief; the licensed part of the army wished to invade our territory for their own account, this being a more terrible danger than that of the French invasion; the American government restrained these rushes of Saxon conquest and availed itself of the diplomatic means to obtain the soon evacuation of our territory by the French army; it thus served the great economic interest whence the *Monroe doctrine* derives, not to permit the preponderance of a European nation in America in order that the Union might be the mistress of the Latin-American markets. By the diplomatic counter-intervention of the Washington cabinet the United States paid us the immense service we had done them hindering by our resistance in 1862 and 1863, France, and probably England, from allying with the confederates and rendering the *secession war* indefinite. ³⁴ Napoleon's attitude. The opposition which the dissident minority in the legislative body always made to the Mexican expedition, greatly disquieted the emperor, not because that tiny group of most eloquent liberals might disturb the course of his policy changing the vote of parliament, but because he felt that opposition supported by the almost unanimous opinion of the country and that weakened the deep roots of the imperial system. Thus it happened that, in spite of the spokesmen of government extolling the advantages of the intervention, the promises of withdrawing the French army in a brief term would become more and more accentuated under the applause of all the representatives, this being very significant. But what did not allow of any tergiversation of Napoleon's in this matter was the coincidence, tragically fatal for the factitious Mexican empire, of the attitude of the United States and the European crisis. The Washington cabinet had always acknowledged the government of Mr. Juarez as the only legitimate one; the federal parliament by its declarations had always manifested its sympathies for the republicans in Mexico and the pretention of the cabinet of the Tuileries the White House should acknowledge the empire as a previous condition for evacuation, seemed a sheer folly. The orders of Johnson's government allowing the Mexican republicans to provide elements of war in the United States began to effect the arming of the national resistance, almost unarmed up to then, and the diplomatic notes of Mr. Seward, Lincoln's foreign secretary, inherited by Johnson, from the day following the conclusion of the civil war up to the embarkment of the French were passing through such a scale of indications, simple exigencies and comminatory exigencies in order to obtain the promise of evacuation, to set terms, to abbreviate the same, to hinder a part of the French army from remaining dissemblingly at the service of the empire, that Mr. Seward may be said to have controlled the movements of the Mexican intervention during the year 1866. The fact is his reclamations coincided with the distressful peripeties of the Austro-Prussian question. Napoleon, biased by his hatred for the anti-napoleonic treaties of 1815 and resolved to destroy that base of the European equilibrium by allowing the disconnected national elements to unite into nations by means of an alliance with France and the plebiscitarian system, in spite of Thiers' clear-sighted warnings, would never believe that the Italian unity and her consequence the German unity necessarily would get organised at the expense of France and against the same. On the contrary, seduced by the

schemes of Bismarck whom, nevertheless, he deemed an illusionist, he permitted the union of Prussia and Italy against Austria, the dissolution of the German confederacy and being resolved to act as an arbiter, he needed to concentrate his forces; since October 1865 the evacuation of Mexico was irrevocably decided upon; as events in Europe went on evolving, that decision became more and more urgent. When war broke out between Austria and Prussia in July 1866 ending with the fulminant surprise of Sadowa (all expected the war to last long), Napoleon, wishing to perform the part of mediator, found himself in face of



Nicholas Régules

a statement of his minister of war, Randon, who declared «the war in Mexico having disorganised the French army, it was not possible to mobilise on the Rhine fifty thousand men.» The first general result of the Mexican expedition was a baffled France.

Then the urging communications from Napoleon to Bazaine began: «Terminate the Mexican affairs anyhow. I have told Empress Charlotte it was impossible for me to give Mexico one more dollar or one more man.» And what to do with Maximilian? Napoleon's capital idea was to *cause him to abdicate* and towards that the whole policy of the invasion in full retrocession was steered: to carry away Maximilian among the baggage of the French army! So he had come, indeed.

It must be avowed a war

with the United States never was a motive of serious fear for France, because neither did they believe it could happen nor did their blind reliance on their military power allow them to consider it an event of great importance; so it is proved by published documents. Such a complication became a motive of apprehensions, of uneasiness and of agony for the French when the European crisis showed them the foolishness of any conflict obliging them to divert hither the greater part of their resources. Bismarck rather than Seward held the key of the Mexican question.

And it was quite a sight to see how, when the evacuation was an irrevocable decree of the French Caesar's will, the explanations of the attitude of France in Mexico multiplied: they had never wanted to implant a government here; the Mexicans had sponta-

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neously chosen monarchy and Maximilian, etc. There were plenty of projects, too: converting the Mexican empire into a federacy of four or five big entities under Maximilian's hegemony; causing him to abdicate and convoking an assembly before which it would be demonstrated that the intentions of France had been pure, that the Mexican people recovered the fulness of its right, etc. All this is disclosed by the letters Napoleon wrote to Bazaine.

While the comedy of diplomatic and political entanglement was thus evolving, events continued their ineluctable course.

In the first months of 1866 the North was already on fire; in Tamaulipas the guerrillas joining and forming considerable fragments of future armies threatened Tampico and the communications with San Luis; on the line of the Bravo, and having for its principal aim the reoccupation of Saltillo, Monterrey and, above all, Matamoros unfruitfully attacked, a considerable group was constituted under the command of Escobedo; a fraction of this nucleus of the future army of the North gained a most brilliant victory over the French at Santa Isabel and although it was afterwards obliged to retrocede towards the river line of the frontier, that combat had marked the new phase of the struggle. The republicans being now better armed, the fight with the invaders began to be less unequal and their boldness was increasing; in June, at Santa Gertrudis, Escobedo succeeded in routing completely a column that left Matamoros for Monterrey guarding a most important convoy; Mejia, the famous native general of the reaction, the most convinced, most loyal and most valorous of the captains on whom imperialism relied in Mexico, capitulated at Matamoros, and in July and August the republicans marching at the heels of the invaders, occupied Tampico, Monterrey and Saltillo, threatening San Luis; some time before Mr. Juarez had settled definitively at Chihuahua bravely reconquered by Terrazas and Sosthenes Rocha; in the State of Durango there were gathering considerable masses of combatants who possessed themselves of the capital when the French saw themselves obliged to abandon the same. En Sinaloa and



Jerome Treviño

Sonora the campaign begun in 1864 had been terrible: since it commenced with the first attempt of the invaders to seize Mazatlan, being undauntedly repelled by Sanchez Ochoa (May 1864), up to the defeat of the French and the Imperialists in the battle at San Pedro (December 1864) that showed in relief before the Republic the noble and great Spartan figure of Rosales, the occupation exertions had remained limited to a short range; with the auxiliaries the French received in Lozada's numerous hords and the remnants of the old reactionist factions the campaign was a most active one; general Corona was indefatigable; the French gave it a character of unspeakable ferocity pitilessly immolating the prisoners, burning down whole towns and committing the numberless misdeeds that marked their passage through the Republic; in this *civilising* work four names of extermination stand out: Castagny in the North, De Pottier in the South, Dupin in the East and Berthelin in the West; many more names may be added to this list of executioners; the chiefs of the African troops, above all, found pleasure in giving death. To be sure, among the invaders there was a respectable group incessantly repudiating, but unable to modify, that abominable conduct founded on the following doctrine: there existing in Mexico a government constituted by the will of the nation, all dissidents are bandits, are outlaws, it is necessary to shoot them, and they shot them. The republican chiefs sometimes made dreadful reprisals; at other times, on the contrary, they showed an admirable magnanimity, as it happened with the Belgians in Michoacan.

In Sinaloa and Sonora, where the French occupied Guaymas and spread over several of the principal towns, the war was always cruel and implacable. There as throughout the country, day by day, the guerrillas were routed, but there was no end of them and so many victories denoted the combat was truceless. In the middle of 1866 the State of Sonora came entirely under the dominion of the republicans, once Guaymas having been abandoned, and then Sinaloa whose chief port the French had found themselves obliged to give up. The elements of war having been laboriously organised that group of strugglers officially denominated «Occident army» and intrusted to the command of general Corona, penetrated into Jalisco almost entirely in rebellion at the middle of 1866 and the magnanimous republican general Parra, having vanquished the last remainders of the French and Imperialist army, occupied Guadalajara at the end of the year. In Michoacan, the pitiless and indefatigable imperialist Mendez held off the patriots who had not ceased fighting as is narrated by Edward Ruiz in his epic and romantic history, and in Oaxaca the banner of the Fatherland was waving in the hands of victory. There general Porphyrius Diaz who audaciously and romanesquely had escaped from captivity at Puebla taking refuge in the inaccessible regions of Guerrero, had organised a nucleus of reconquest round which the bands that maintained alive that State's protestation, conglomerated; general Diaz, a man made for ordering, administering and directing as well as for choosing the most prudent and secure means and for executing with an extraordinary boldness a maturely conceived plan, in the last months of 1866 felt strong enough to undertake the siege of Oaxaca; at first the battle of Miahuatlan allowed him to organise the besiegment and then that of La Carbonera by which the relief column was undone, placed the beleaguered town at his mercy so that it capitulated; thus at the moment of supreme exertion he returned the Republic with increment the army, the elements and the place lost in 1865.

Considering that besides this the whole coast was in arms, the Vera Cruzan and Huastec sierras crossed by already tolerably organised bodies of troops going to be classed under the superior direction of the conqueror of Oaxaca, it will be understood that the central region, the only one dominated by the invaders, surrounded with this immense zone of conflagration devouring the Tableland from every part of its perimeter, was doomed to succumb under the circumferential pressure.

The French army, controlling the lines of retreat of the invasion converging towards the capital and that which from this leads to Veracruz, it must be avowed gave proof of a really surprising dauntlessness, activity and elasticity; it became soon apparent that neither the invaders were able to hinder the reorganisation and advance of the republican armies increasing on their march like the giant of the myth, nor could these deal a mortal blow on the invasion that retreated and contracted so energetically; hence there arose a sort of tacit pact between the belligerents: the French economised the combats, the republicans did not provoke them. And so all was marching towards its end.

So Maximilian saw it marching; trusting in the word of honour gentlemanly given him in Paris by Napoleon to retain his army in Mexico for five years, he interpreted all the advertisements of evacuation as threats in order to push his activity, as effects of the ever hostile informations of Bazaine fretful by the conations of rebellion of his imperial pupil, or as apparent diplomatic satisfactions to the United States. Albeit, emissaries were coming and going between Paris and Mexico; Eloin made a fruitless voyage, Almonte's projects based on the permanence of the army were rejected; Saillard and, at length, the marshal spoke clear and presented an *ultimatum* that could be summed up thus: withdrawal-abdication; neither intervention nor empire. Maximilian unwillingly began to see clear; Empress Charlotte, manlier, cleverer, prouder than her husband, daunted by the prospect, unbearable for her self-love, to act the part of a queen without a crown receiving an Austrian annuity, went personally to record Napoleon his word and to prevent the catastrophe inevitable in her opinion after the withdrawal of the French. She travelled terribly excited; the fever of disquiet and ambition rather humbled than satisfied, in which she had been living these five years, reached its acme; when at the light of torches and



Francis Naranjo

amidst the rain and torrential streams she defiled on horseback through the vertiginous straits of the Chiquihuite, with her retinue shivering and stiff with cold, she roused in many a mind the record of her remote ancestress Queen Jane the mad accompanying the body of her husband through the Castile nights. She arrived at Paris, spoke with Napoleon who flatly disowned his word, heard from the implacable lips of that exasperate dreamer the death sentence of her empire and came out struck with mental death; the tragedy began as if it were traced by an *Æschylus* capable to stir, on gigantic stages, events, peoples and mankind.

Maximilian felt himself gripped by the claw of antique fatality and painfully winced thereunder with intervals of indolence and submission. Bazaine and the emissaries of Napoleon who was unwilling to contract before history the responsibility of a bloody catastrophe urged him incessantly to yield up the throne; the attitude of the United States had hindered the organisation of an imperial army with foreign elements; the treasury was empty; a good deal of the funds of the second French loan had been destined, by a shameful agreement, to the payment of a part of the Jecker credit, a kind of sinister raven that appeared on the ruins of the reaction and both empires, the Mexican and the French, until it was struck down among the rubbish by the balls of the Commune; the French had possessed themselves of the custom houses; so there was no way to get on. By a sort of whim of a political artist, Maximilian concluded a pact with death and applied to reaction; this was like stumbling at the border of a tomb; a few honest men, to be sure, serene although hopeless, accepted the mission to enter that baseless and propless house in the midst of an earth quake: Maximilian saw quite well that all was irremediable; what he was looking for was not the saving of the throne, it was a dignified attitude; he ought to have abdicated or issued a manifesto explaining before the world how he had been deceived and what had been the conduct of France, abbreviating the last struggle, delivering into the hands of the national government the not reconquered towns, thus shutting up without brilliancy but not without dignity the ephemeral dream of his impossible greatness. He decided to do so listening to the counsels of his best friends; but the reactionary spectre desperately laid its skeleton hands on the imperial mantle; the reaction killed by Maximilian seemed the Commendator's statue coming to drag his killer to the sepulchre. What happened? Is it true Maximilian received a letter from his mother speaking to him of the honour preferable to life for men of his name and his stem? Is it true that Eloin wrote the famous decisive letter in which he conjured Maximilian not to abdicate till after the French had departed and the Mexican people had manifested its desire to go back to Republic, for otherwise he would return to Europe without prestige and disabled for the part he had to perform in vanquished Austria, Francis Joseph being about to resign? Who wot! The result was that Maximilian converted into the last chieftain of what still lived in the military reactionarism and accompanied by Lares, Miramon, Marquez, returned from Orizaba, on the road of abdication, to Mexico on the first days of 1867.

In March the last French battalion embarked at Veracruz; the French banner, blackened, was going from the tragedy here to the tragedy there.

Every one thought he was fulfilling his personal duty; on the side of the republicans



duty was plain and clear; the tremendous reproach of an alliance with the North-Americans, of alienation of the territory, was vanishing like smoke; out of it arose most high and pure the image of the Fatherland; there was no room for either tergiversation or vacillation; that was the ensign, the *in hoc signo vinces* of the armies converging from the East, the North, the West towards the imperial camp. Since the first notice of the intervention the Republic had armed herself with inflexible laws, with such as oblige every citizen to enlist under the banner of the Nation invaded; there were no neutrals nor could there be any: either Mexicans or traitors, the law said; the traitor delivers up his life to the gallows and his fortune to confiscation. And in order that nobody might think it was a law of frightening and not of justice, its promulgation had been signed with general Robles Pezuela's blood. At the pace Republic advanced, she punished the disloyal: fines, confiscations, executions, marked the road of implacable Nemesis; all who took arms against her, all who had usurped power, the foreigners who served in the hostile army, were doomed to capital pain. A good deal of society felt their hearts oppressed with anguish.

The imperialist party became dissolved at Orizaba when its head drew the fratricidal sword of reaction; this corpse rose galvanised not by an ideal which Maximilian never ceased to disclaim, but by a hatred. The members of the imperialist party withdrew into the shade or fled abroad; without the least hope of triumph, certain of the Republic's and content thereof in the inmost of their grieved consciences, but keeping a deep personal adhesion to the unfortunate prince, they awaited punishment with stoic dignity. The remnants of the militant reaction, the excommunicated outlaws of the Republic crowded around the emperor whom they had obliged to remain and whom they were going to drag through the sinister stages of defeat and death. Resolute, valorous, illusionless they sought like the gladiators of the imperial circus, an attitude to succumb before the world; nearly all of them knew how to fight and many knew how to die. Justice and history have executed them; peace to their shades, respect to the ground where they lie; it is the blessed ground of the Fatherland; their death reconciled them with their mother; they are Mexicans.

What would have availed the unfortunate artist whom one of destiny's billows had set down on a throne (a wrecked ship of which there remained only one board) to repudiate all who told him his honour consisted in remaining and succumbing, was this simple truth: «Before I can succumb thousands of men must perish; I cannot surrender to history my honour converted into a chalice of blood.» But it must be avowed the young emperor owing to his utterly impressionable temper passed from one pole to the other with an extraordinary versatility. When he left Mexico in order to direct the campaign of the interior concentrating all the imperialist garrisons and conserving only Veracruz, Puebla, Mexico and Yucatan where the wealthy class in its majority accepted the empire and was chivalrously feal and leal, he seemed sure of the triumph; Miramon, with temerary enterprise, had marched towards Zacatecas to surprise Juarez and his government and to bring them as hostages to Querétaro; he was at a hair-breadth of success, but having failed in his attempt, it was clear the return was to be a disaster. A good deal of the North army went to encounter the audacious captain, broke up and undid his column and applied the law to the alien prisoners (San Jacinto); the vanquished chiefs joined Maximilian who, followed by Marquez, Mejia and Mendez, in the first line, settled at Querétaro, precisely on the spot

whence he could fall upon the republican armies coming one from the West through Michoacan, the other from the North through San Luis endeavouring to beat them successively with his war proven and desperate and therefore more fearful forces. Time was spent on discussions and rivalities, the republican armies joined; Escobedo, characterised by his prudence, his constancy and his unbounded adhesion to the Republic, took the command in chief and directly immobilised the emperor at Querétaro. To fetch an auxiliary army in order to get out from there by weakening the incessantly increasing force of the republicans, was an elementary scheme; Marquez left for Mexico with this aim and then there began around Querétaro the terrible combats of April wherein the beleaguered showed their bravery and their impotency; the irregular forces of the Republic would show their tactical inferiority in the struggle, another part of the army admirably organised and armed being constantly obliged to set things aright; but the fact was the impossibility, quite obvious in May, not to make the enemy raise the siege but to break through it.

Marquez was unable to come; at the same time as the great army of the Republic fixed Maximilian for ever in Querétaro, Diaz came up to the valley of Puebla, and while a part of his troops besieged Veracruz, he tried to seize the angelopolitan town; the garrison defended themselves very well and the republican general deemed the achievement of his undertaking a question of much time, mainly because the forces composing his army came from everywhere undisciplined, being autonomous bodies so to say, that only by degrees would submit and become regularised on the very battle field; the general in chief could rely unconditionally only on one group that obeyed him like a sole man. Marquez determined to relieve by all means the garrison of Puebla and left Mexico at the head of a brilliant perfectly armed column, having, though, at his heels a division of cavallery detached from Querétaro by general Escobedo. Very seldom, may be never, in our military annals a besieging army had found itself in a more critical position; the republican general measured all, weighed all, was aware of his immense responsibility, seeing clearly that the destiny of Puebla and of Querétaro depended on his resolution; he resolved, chose his collaborators, distributed his army and almost feeling at his back the accelerated pace of the relieving column, pushed all his force on the enemy's forts; rapid, awfully bloody this tragedy was bestrewn with heroic episodes; bleeding, mutilated like the admirable officer who fell in Siempreviva street, the republican army grouped around a chieftain in whom it had since that moment a kind of superstitious trust, at the centre of Puebla, conquered on the 2nd of April. This action, the most remarkable one of the war against the empire, was but a first act: the column of Marquez, beaten, weakened, vanquished, a little while after, gathers at Mexico its steel rings, broken in spite of the bravery of Kövenhuller's Hungarian cavaliers, and before he could become conscious of the disaster, the republican forces surrounded Mexico and fastened there Marquez to whom has been unjustly imputed an intention to betray Maximilian; he was unable to execute the plan he was intrusted with, because he was crushed by the events and that was the second act.

Meanwhile, every new combat was exhaustive for the beleaguered in Querétaro; the Republic restored to health was sending battalions after battalions to reinforce the siege; had she had resources and arms as she counted at that moment in the whole extent of the country with perhaps one hundred thousand men, she might have had at her disposal two

hundred thousand combatants. At Querétaro they were living by nervous force, by the instinct of self conservation; they were fighting with gloomy despair; the winding up became inevitable, indeed, it was immutable like fate; they were going to die. A desperate sally by which one fifth of the army would have escaped for a while allowing the remainder to be killed, was the supreme resolution of the beleaguered. To the blood already shed a new stream of blood was to be added; Maximilian, in that senseless attempt, would be killed or captured...

The commander of the post of La Cruz, an intimate friend of the emperor's, called Michael Lopez (care must be taken not to confound with him the heroic artisan who died, wrapped up in the banner of the Republic, in May 1863, fighting against the French), had a conference with general Escobedo and delivered his post; and by this fact the place was immediately dominated and a few hours later it surrendered (May 15th 1867). The best army of the Empire, nearly all its warriors of importance and Maximilian, fell into the hands of the republican army. This hastened an event no human power would have been able to hinder; since the last days of April Querétaro was virtually in the hands of Escobedo.

Maximilian, judged according to a law anterior to his acception of the crown, legally must die; his military judges called to apply a stringent law to an evident case could not do anything else than what they did; to the government of Juarez the supreme political act, pardon, belonged. He denied it; he did well; he was just. It is awfully sad to say so when we refer to a man who deemed himself destined to regenerate Mexico and to the valorous men who were his companions of calvary. The future peace of Mexico, her absolute independence on diplomatic tutelage, her entrance in full international majority of age, the impossibility of attenuating the rigour of the law if the disloyal party were not unheaded, obliged the government of Juarez to be not inhumane but inflexible, as Maximilian, in spite of his bountifulness, had deemed himself obliged to be with the victims of his decree of October 3^d, 1865. The solemn act of republican justice was achieved at Querétaro on June 19th, 1867. Maximilian, after writing a noble letter to Juarez, was executed with his companions Miramon and Mejia on the Cerro de las Campanas; he yielded the



Ignatius L. Alatorre

post of honour in dying to ever undaunted Miramon and all three rivalised in manlihood. The one who morally excels above the two others is the indigene; Tomas Mejia was perseveringly faithful to his idea, fought and died for a cause he identified with his unshakable religious faith and he believed himself to be a soldier of Christ when he fought for the reaction and the empire; for him it was never possible to diversify catholicism and fatherland; he was of the temper of the crusaders and the martyrs; he could have saved his life: he was unwilling to do so but under the condition his companions should be safe two; any Mexican, with whatever party he may side, ought to salute this tomb with pride and with respectfulness.

General Diaz who after his splendid victory at Puebla had obliged Marquez to make himself strong in Mexico, invested him closely with an army that directly after the capture of Querétaro was probably the largest ever seen in all our history. Twenty times it would have been possible to take the town by assault; never did the republican general think of this frightful extreme measure; he knew quite well it was a sure prey and so this great saver realised an immense saving of blood. The lieutenant of the empire by an unheard of system of delusions and astuteness, contrived to make his resistance survive a month that of Querétaro, whilst he was preparing his hiding place and his flight; on a sudden he disappeared and Mexico surrendered to general Diaz on June 21st.

With the empire, with the war officially called «second independence war,» the great period of Mexican revolution ended, having actually begun in 1810, but being definitively renewed in 1857. During the great last phase of this contention of more than half a century Mexico had lost on the battle fields and by the consequences of the war surely more than three hundred thousand men, but it had acquired a soul, national unity; everywhere there had been struggle; had it been possible to convert into spray all the blood shed the whole extent of the country, foot by foot, would have been covered with the bloody dew; it had been fecund. Furiously shattering a throne, perseveringly appealing from force to right, mortally wounding the military power of France and the empire of Napoleon III, incarnating in Juarez the uncompromising and tenacious resistance to any interference from abroad in our sovereignty, not only in the form of a European intervention, but even in that of an American alliance, Mexico had saved her independence, had conquered her full self-consciousness and had vassaled history.

The supreme indestructibility of this fact became so apparent in every mind that the Republic, seeing before her, in her enemies, individuals more or less culpable, but all of them resigned and compliant, the parties being dead without any hope of resurrection, could afford to be clement and become the interpreter of an infinite desire of forgiveness and peace obtaining in the people's hearts and it was felt that justice, before so much error, so much wilful and unwilled culpability, was clemency, was equity.

The Republic became then the nation; all, with ignored exceptions, assisted at the triumph, all understood there was a definitively accomplished fact, that conquests had been realised that would be eternal in history, that Reform, Republic and Country were, from that moment, the same thing there being but one national banner, the Constitution of 1857; under this all would anew be citizens, be Mexicans, be free. Vanquished and vanquishers, by the irresistible force of an idea including Mexico's whole future, were to join in a

common longing: to realise the law, to realise the right, to enthrone justice. The Constitution that had divided the country as a sword divides, united it at last in a supreme ideal; the road was seen clear: to make the Constitution a truth in society, founding all rights on the national organisation by means of the education, the labour, that is to say, of material and intellectual progress, and to start thence to make that Constitution live in the political order, modifying it in all that in its form was incompatible with the sovereign necessity of freedom and order. This was slow, this was a task for several generations; the revolutionary shakes, the deep quakes that mark the extinction period of the volcanoes would not lack, they could not lack; the past does not end in one century, it concludes little by little throughout history. But a new era began on the day when the greatest citizen the Republic ever begot pronounced this sentence engraved over the door of the Times to come: «Let people and government respect the rights of all. Between individuals as between nations the respect of the right of others is Peace.»

Justus Sierra.

At the *Conclusion* of this work, forming consequently the final part of the second volume, the reader will find, under the rubric «the present Era,» a brief summary of the contemporary national history since the restoration of the Republic, also written by Mr. Justus Sierra. The author thought the events comprised in the last thirty three years of our century formed obviously a logical whole and it would be an act of violence and lack of order to divide them into parts susceptible to be sundered by a long interval in the present work without harming its unity.—THE EDITOR.



PART THIRD

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.
THE STATES OF THE MEXICAN FEDERACY.
FOREIGN RELATIONS.

CHAPTER FIRST

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

BRIEF REVIEW OVER MEXICAN POLITICS SINCE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE
TO THE FALL OF DICTATOR SANTA ANNA. THE AYUTLA REVOLUTION. POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF 1857.
LATER REFORMS OF THAT CONSTITUTION

MEXICO's political emancipation was achieved in September 1821 after a strenuous and bloody struggle. On the ruins of the tercentenary Spanish domination the new nationality that made her appearance in the concert of the free peoples had to raise the edifice of her institutions at the beat of the justifiable wrath of the triumphers and the unextinguished hatred of the vanquished. And that immense labour was accurately enunciated by generalissimo Iturbide the very day of his entrance into the capital of what ceased to be the *vicereyship of New Spain*: «Mexicans! now you know the way to be free; it is your turn to mark that of being happy...»

It was a great pity for his name that the leader of 1821, heir for a great deal to the immense sacrifices of a generation combated by him with bloody spite and from whose lips flowed those words worthy of a hero of Plutarch's, should venture, a few months later, to undertake the sad enterprise of binding the new nation's happiness to his personal exaltation on a throne without any foundation, auxiliaries and prestige!

Iturbide's ephemeral empire, however, was but a short parenthesis in the history of our political institutions' laborious gestation.

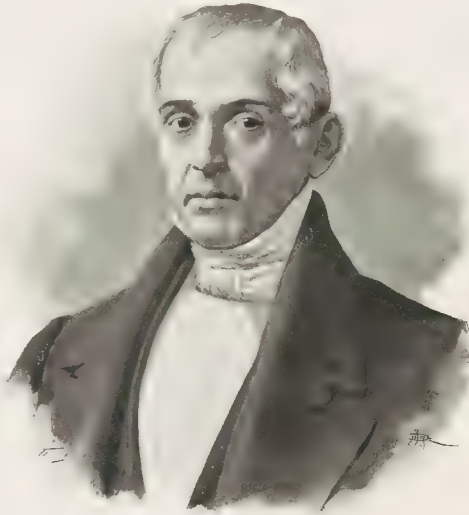
In order to draw a complete picture of the disparate elements existing in the new Hispano-american State when it shook off the domination inaugurated with the conquest in the first third of the XVI century, it would be necessary to remount in the history of Mexico up to the epoch immediately preceding the arrival of the hosts of Ferdinand Cortés; but this task, besides drawing us far from the starting point we have chosen, would exceed the bounds marked for this section of the book.

Iturbide's fall in the first months of 1823 eased for the republicans of the independence war the realisation of their political ideals and in October 1824 the Republic appeared constituted under the democratic representative and federal form, with a political code imbued by its authors with the most culminating theoretical principles of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 and not a few copied from that of the United States of America. This confusion, this mixture of political principles many of which were incompatible and contradictory with one another, by no means justifies a censure about the aptitude and intentions of the founders of the Mexican Republic. Our progenitors lacking political experience, but immensely fond of freedom, without the preparatory education our Northern neighbours had received before proclaiming their independence and settling their institutions on sound bases, founded the Republic, in the first third of the century, driven by purest enthusiasm and trusting the people, fond of its autonomy and having followed them through the bloody struggle of eleven years, would confound hence forward in one and the same worship, Independence and Republic. They might believe the habits and customs of a free people would effortlessly derive from the law and attributing the same the rare prestige and most amazing efficacy of creating usages, habits and social and political conditions instead of reflecting them, they considered their work ended when it was just beginning.

Do we mean to say the ardent and tried Mexican patriots who founded the Republic would have

struck the right note if just after achieving the independence they had established a monarchy represented either by a Bourbon of the Spanish branch or by a national dynasty more fragile and ephemeral than that erected by the author of the Iguala plan, disowned and boisterously pulled down by themselves? It would be a disgrace, and a great one, for us who have lived to see the end of the XIX century and our Country independent, prosperous, all-respected and in full development of the national activity at the shelter of its free institutions, it would be a great disgrace, we repeat, to condemn to-day the foundation of the Republic, albeit precipitated and unpreceded by a slow and progressive preparation. The fact is that young party affirmed by its creation the national autonomy, boldly defined the several and undetermined fields where the inhabitants of old New Spain found themselves comprised the day after severing from the mother country, and with peerless daring and a rare and singular patriotism laid the foundation of a political organisation which successively becoming more and more improved would at last get identified, in the feelings of the large majority of the Mexican people, with the ardent worship it always has consecrated to liberty and independence.

Here it is pertinent to state very loudly that few judgments ever were so light-headed and formulated with so much ignorance as that which about the agitated and tempestuous political life of Mexico during nearly half a century counting from the establishment of the Republic, arose and with an amazing readiness diffused among the other nations. Without a previous study of the exceptional situation this country found itself in when it became arbiter of its destinies, without a serene criterion accurately to judge the complicate causes of our civil contentions, but with an excess of petulant and despective sufficiency there has not been a foreign



Valentine Gomez Tarias

historian or publicist writing on Mexican affairs who failed to impute the origin of our bloody quarrels to the measureless ambition of the political coryphees and the depravation of a people unworthy to live under the beneficial and fecund shade of freedom and democracy. These judgments were accepted abroad as though they were incontrovertible historical truths and besides the great harm they caused our country, more than once they might serve as a pretext for unjust aggressions, for the most irritant abuse of force and the disavowment of all right as though Mexico stood outside of the laws that shelter and protect the civilised peoples.

But what bold petulance was unwilling or unable to know is easily to be understood by him who free from prejudices and with a lofty and tranquil mind, philosophically studies the history of independent Mexico without excluding from his critic the breeding, habits, usages, customs and interests which Spanish domination implanted and maintained in this country during the length of three centuries.

The partisans of absolute monarchy, and among them we must comprise the large majority of the Spaniards then residing in New Spain and not a few Mexicans, very efficaciously contributed in 1821 to the consummation of the independence precisely to conjure the peril they were threatened with by the

triumph of the Constitution of 1812 that in Spain had been forced upon the disloyal and oppressor Ferdinand VII. Iturbide having fallen under the blows of the old and tried insurgents and of those who chose him as an instrument for their aims but who became his most eager adversaries from the moment he turned victory to his own profit and not that of the prince they craved to see sitting on the throne of Mexico, the Republic imposed itself by the very force of things: for the sincere republicans the new political institutions, as we have already stated, signified the realisation of their most cherished ideals and the worthy finish of the rude contention sustained by them during the space of eleven years; for the partisans of absolutism, Spaniards and Mexicans, they were but the forced concession granted the ally against the common foe and the opportunity better to prepare their work in order to establish absolute monarchy at a longer or a shorter term.

At the head of this powerful partiality and much stronger and much more influential than the other privileged classes that composed the same, there stood the great majority of the clergy: this had openly opposed the movement on behalf of independence; its high dignitaries anathematised the insurgents, they were the inspirers of the Iguala plan in order to free themselves of the reformist revolution that broke out in Spain in 1820 and the clergy constituted itself into directing centre and compact and formidable nucleus of the party afterwards called conservative.

The republican constitution of 1824 proclaimed as religion of the State the catholic with exclusion of any other, thus giving the clergy an official existence which forcibly implied the establishment of certain relations between it and the national government. But amid this situation the clergy refused to acknowledge in the supreme authorities of the new Republic the patronage of the Spanish monarchs it was subjected to formerly, and the government, by its turn, always defended the opposite doctrine, viz that patronage was a right inherent to national sovereignty. Hence a constant quarrel, sometimes subdued and slightly veiled by the forms of an apparent concert, at other times manifesting itself rank and boisterous. Certainly the Roman curia might have attempted and realised a stable agreement, had it not been opposed, first by the clergy itself well pleased with the preponderant condition created for it by the political independence of the former colony and then by the disaffection and haughtiness of the Pontifical court towards Mexico and the other new Hispano-American States, either because they had adopted republican institutions or in consequence of the poor conception held at Rome about their civilisation and culture and the stability of the governments of their own they had erected.

Thus, with helpers ready to betray the Republic and even Independence; with a clergy resolved to keep an almost decisive influence in political matters, an indisputable supremacy in social affairs and an irresistible preponderance, by its wealth, in the sphere of national economy, with the ignorance of the popular masses and with the immense stumbling blocks the incipient republican and democratic system was to meet in a country accustomed to obey the viceroys representatives of the absolute monarch, we must marvel at the exertions of the Mexican republican party to consolidate and shield the political institutions it had planted against so many enemies, declared or unconscious but all of them conspiring in their detriment.

It is not incumbent on us to follow up, not even in broad outlines, the development of the Mexican revolution during the period of thirty years (from the foundation of the Republic to the political movement of Ayutla), a relation thereof having been made in the historical sketch with which this book opens; but we feel obliged to state that amid the raging tempest sweeping over the Republic, amid the frightful anarchy agitating and tearing it and where superficial observers only see the effects of personal ambitions, we behold the struggle between the liberal and reformist principle and the interest radically hostile not only to the suitable expansion of the civil and political liberties, but even to the national independence itself. In 1833 the liberal party headed by the illustrious republican Valentine Gomez Farias attempts at lessening the excessive powerfulness of the clergy and the privileged classes, but they are saved by general Santa Anna who exchanges his legal titles of head of the State for those of a leader of the conservative faction. Dictatures and centralism succeed one another alternating with restaurations of

the federal Constitution of 1824; the sinister Paredes, in an epoch of supreme moment, enervates the defensive elements of the country threatened by the ambition of the United States of America and the anti-patriotic egoism of the clergy together with the military ineptitude of Santa Anna hasten the fatal winding up of an unequal and bloody struggle with the rapacious foreigner. The nation after so vehement a shaking seems resolved to turn to profit the bitter lessons of experience and public opinion supports and applauds the successive presidents Herrera and Arista who exert themselves in the noble endeavour to render fecund the peace that begins to shine in the Republic after so many years of incessant fratricidal contentions.

Once more the conservative party became master of the government and from the first months of 1853 erected the most oppressive and ignominious of the dictatorships that have lain hard on the Mexican country. General Santa Anna, accomplished type of the political Proteus, was the dictator chosen by the clergy and the privileged classes and forsooth, that choice, examined to-day with a dispassionate criterion and valued accurately by the results it produced, proved highly beneficial for liberty and democracy. Indeed, it would have been impossible to find a more violent oppressor than the kinglet called back from his voluntary banishment by the conservative band that he might worry the Republic for more than two years by the excesses of his boundless tyranny; this man trafficked with the national territory selling a piece of it like him who disposes of a superfluous part of his own estate, and he would certainly have alienated other portions of his country's soil,

had but some byers come up; being the protagonist in the gloomy drama evolving in the biennium from 1853 to 1855, he displayed, together with a cold and calculated cruelty, the *giddiness of omnipotency*, a mental perturbation so called by the profound observers of the history of imperial Rome and which explains the ferocious insanity of so many villains who affrighted the world, and the Mexican dictator like the personages immortalised by Shakespeare offered his countrymen the terrible at the side of the grotesque; the violence of that brutal and delirious reaction provoked and hastened a vigorous action whilst under other conditions it would have evolved languid and insufficient; and lastly, out of hatred against the dictatorship that left behind so many ruins and tears, the liberal party pulling it down with



Joseph M.ª Mata

indefatigable exertions succeeded in constituting the country on the very broadest bases of liberty and justice.

The Ayutla scheme, proclaimed by a group of distinguished patriots on March 1st, 1854, and reformed some days later at Acapulco, was the starting point of a revolution that brought about results of great and transcendent moment for the Republic. The authors of that political movement when calling their countrymen to arms, disavowed the dictator energetically condemning his abuses and promised to convoke an extraordinary constituent Congress destined to organise the nation politically under the form of a popular representative Republic and to revise the acts of the dictatorship as well as those of the provisional government established after the said scheme and intrusted with the mission to convoke for elections.

The rebellion against Santa Anna met the then dominant feelings: one year had already elapsed since the conservative party raised over Mexico the most overbearing and despotic of autocracies and the dictator's blunders and political crimes could be counted as many as the days of life of his iron government. An immense rejoicing spread therefore among the patriot citizens at the news the old Mexican valour had been roused and stood up against the numerous army levied by the dictatorship, and the promise of constituting the nation on the base of a popular federative republic encouraged in all the good ones the desire radically to stop the abuses and to cut the fetters that hampering the march of the country had affrouted and depressed her before both natives and foreigners during the space of a third of the century.

A year and a half after the proclamation of the Ayutla platform and after many bloody struggles in the South and the East of the Republic, Santa Anna abandoned the soil of his country in August 1855.

The revolution, apparently triumphant with the downfall of the dictatorship, had still to undertake and achieve the most difficult part of its programme: to constitute the country according to the aspirations of the great majority that had favoured the revolution and made it come out victorious from the battle fields. The constituent Congress opened its sessions on February 18th, 1856 and closed them on the 17th of the same month in 1857.

It is not our task to relate either the most serious difficulties over which the government directly issuing from the triumph of the Ayutla platform stumbled or the interesting discussions that were susci-tated in the constituent assembly; but we must expound, with all possible brevity, the principles contained in the political Constitution promulgated on February 5th, 1857 and which, with the reforms legally decreed at posterior times, is the supreme law of the Mexican Republic.

The political Code of the Union acknowledges that the rights of man are the base and aim of social institutions. In the Republic all are born free and slaves treading the national territory by this sole fact recover their freedom and have a right to claim the protection of the laws.

Teaching is free and the law will determine what professions need a title to be exercised. Everybody is free to undertake any profession, industry or work he deems suitable being useful and honest and to make the best of the produce thereof.

Nobody can be obliged to do personal service without due retribution or without his full assent nor can any contract be lawful having for its aim the loss or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of man on behalf of labour, education or a religious vow or any agreement implying a man's proscription or banishment.

The manifestation of one's ideas cannot be made the object of any judicial or administrative inquisition but in the case they attack the morals or the rights of a third person, provoke a crime or misdemeanour, or break the public peace. Inviolable is, in consequence, the liberty to write and to publish writings, on any matter, previous censure and exaction of pledges from editors or publishers being forbidden and no authority will be allowed to coerce the liberty of the press that has no other limits than the respect for private life, morals and public peace; offences against the press-laws will be tried by jury.

The right of petition exercised by writing in a pacific and respectful way is inviolable; in matters politic, however, it can only be exercised by citizens of the Republic.

All inhabitants of the country have the right to associate or to meet peacefully with any licit aim; but only the citizens of the Republic may do so in order to take part in political affairs.

Wearing arms for personal security and legitimate defence is a human right.

In the Republic there are no titles of nobility nor are such recognised, nor prerogatives nor hereditary honours; however, the nation through her representatives may decree rewards in honour of the persons that have done eminent services to their country or to humanity.

Nobody is to be tried after privative laws or by special tribunals. No person or corporation can have a particular jurisdiction, the military one subsisting solely for the offences and faults having a strict connexion with military discipline. No retroactive law is ever to be issued and nobody is to be tried or doomed but according to laws passed with anteriority to the fact and exactly applied to it by the tribunal previously established by the law.

Never treaties will be concluded for the extradition of political offenders or of those who had been in the condition of slaves in the country where they committed the offence.

Only in virtue of a writ from the competent authority stating the grounds and motives of the legal cause of the procedure, a citizen may be molested in his person, family, domicile, papers and possessions; but in the case of overtaking in the very act any person may apprehend the transgressor and his accomplices delivering them up without delay to the immediate authority.

Imprisonment for debts of a purely civil character is forbidden. Nobody is allowed to practise violence in claiming his right, the tribunals being always ready to administer justice.

Imprisonment is allowable only for transgressions deserving corporal punishment. No detention can exceed the term of three days without being justified by a writ stating the reason for arrestment.

In any criminal trial the defendant will have the following securities:

he must be informed of the motive of the procedure and the name of the plaintiff if there be any; he must be submitted to a preliminary examination within forty eight hours after his being at the disposal of his judge; he must be confronted with the witnesses deponing against him; he must be made acquainted with the statements made during the process in order to prepare his discharges; and he must be heard in defence by himself or by a person of his reliance or by both of them according to his choice and in the case he has none to defend him, a list of official counsels will be laid before him that he may elect him or them he may deem fit.

The infliction of punishment is exclusively incumbent on the judicial authority; the political and administrative authorities can impose only as a correction fines up to five hundred dollars, confinement up to one month. For ever forbidden are the pains of mutilation and infamy, brand, rods, sticks, all kinds of torment, excessive fine, confiscation of estates and whatsoever other unwonted or transcendent penalties.

Regarding the abolition of capital punishment the administrative power is charged to establish as soon as may be, the penitentiary system; meanwhile it is abolished for political offences and must not be extended to other cases than those of a traitor of his country in foreign war, a highwayman, an incendiary, a parricide, a murderer with insidiousness, premeditation or vantage, grave offences in military matters and those of piracy as the law would define.

No trial can pass through more than three courts; nobody can be tried twice for the same offence whether he be absolved or doomed in the judgment.

The property of the persons cannot be occupied without their consent, unless it be for public purposes and



Mexico.—National Palace. The President's Audience-chamber

with previous indemnification. The law will determine the authority that must make the dispossession and also the requirements with which it must be effectuated.

No corporation, either civil or ecclesiastic, whatever its character may be, will have legal capacity to acquire real estate as property or to be managed by itself.

There will be no monopolies or exclusive licenses of any kind, nor prohibitions in the way of protection to industry. Exceptions will be made regarding the coinage of money, the post and the privileges which the law grants inventors or improvers for a limited time.

In cases of invasion, grave perturbation of public peace or any other putting society in great jeopardy or conflict, only the president of the Republic, accordant with the Council of ministers and with the approval of the Union's Congress and during the recess of same, of the permanent Deputation, may suspend the guarantees bestowed in the Constitution; but he must do so for a limited term by means of general preventions, the suspension never being allowed to confine to a determined individual.

Mexicans are: all who were born of Mexican parents inside or outside the territory of the Republic; the foreigners having got themselves naturalised in conformity with the laws of the Union, and the foreigners who acquire real estate in the Republic or have Mexican children unless they state their resolution to keep their nationality.

Every Mexican is obliged: to defend the independence, the territory, the honour, the rights and interests of his country and to contribute to the public expenses, as well of the Federacy as of the particular State and municipality in which he is dwelling.

The foreigners have a right to claim the guarantees bestowed in the first section of the Constitution stating the rights of man, save at any rate the faculty possessed by Government to expel a pernicious foreigner. They are obliged to contribute for the public expenses in the manner the laws may dispose and to obey and respect the institutions, laws and authorities of the country, submitting under the dooms and sentences of the tribunals and not being allowed to attempt at other recourses than those the laws grant the Mexicans.

Citizens of the Republic are all those who having the quality of Mexicans satisfy besides the following conditions: to be at least eighteen years of age when married or twenty-one when single and to have an honest livelihood.

The prerogatives of a citizen are: to vote in popular elections; to be eligible for any office of popular election and able to be nominated for any other employment or commission having the qualities established by law; to associate in order to handle the political affairs of the country; to take arms in the army or national guard for the defence of the Republic or her institutions and to exercise the right of petition in any kind of affairs.

And his obligations are: to get himself entered in the register of his municipality, to enlist in the national guard, to vote in the popular elections and to discharge the Federacy's offices of popular election.

The national sovereignty is essentially and originally residing in the people. All public power derives from the people and is instituted for its welfare. The people owns for ever the inalienable right to change or modify the form of its government.

It is the will of the Mexican people to constitute itself in a representative, democratic, federal Republic composed of free States and sovereign in everything referring to their inner management but united into a Federacy settled after the principles of the fundamental law. The people exercises its sovereignty by means of the Union powers in the cases of their competence and of the States powers in matters concerning the interior management within the terms established respectively by the federal Constitution and the particulars of the States which in no case will be allowed to contravene the stipulations of the federal pact.

The national territory comprises that of the integrant parts of the Federacy and, besides, that of the adjacent islands in both seas.

The integrant parts of the Federacy (in 1857) are: the States of Aguascalientes, Colima, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacan, New Leon and Coahuila, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Valley of Mexico, Veracruz, Yucatan, Zacatecas and Territory of Lower California.

The Supreme power of the Federacy is divided, in behalf of its exercise, in the Legislative, Executive and Judicial powers. Never two or all of these powers can be combined in one person or corporation nor can the Legislative power be deposited in one sole individual.

The exercise of the Legislative Power is deposited in an assembly to be denominated *Congress of the Union*. This will be composed of representatives elected all of them every two years.

There will be a deputy for every forty thousand inhabitants or a fraction of more than twenty thousand; for every deputy proper a suppletory one will be named.

The elections for deputies will be indirect in the first degree. The requirements to be eligible as a deputy



Mexico.—National Palace. Waiting-room in the Presidency

are: to be a Mexican citizen in possession of his rights, to be full twenty five years old on the day the sessions are opened, to be a burgher of the State where the election takes place and not to belong to the clergy.

The deputies, from the day of their election until the day their charge ends, cannot accept any nomination from the Executive of the Union implying a salary to be drawn thereof, without a previous license of Congress. The deputies are inviolable for their opinions manifested in the performance of their charge.

Congress will have two periods of ordinary sessions every year: the first will begin on September 16th and will end on December 15th; the second, undelayable, will begin April 1st ending on the last of May.

The right of initiating laws belongs: to the President of the Union, to the deputies to the federal Congress, and to the legislatures of the States. The initiatives introduced by the President of the Union, the legislatures of the States and the Deputations of the same will pass directly to commission. Those introduced by a deputy will be subjected to the course of proceedings established by the regulation of debate.

The second period of sessions will be devoted above all to examine and vote the budget of the next fiscal year introduced by the Executive, to fix the taxes needed to meet the expenses and to revise the accounts of the foregoing year produced by the Executive.

The main faculties of Congress are: to admit new States or Territories into the Federal Union, to erect Terri-

tories into States, to form new States within the limits of the existing ones, to settle definitively the boundaries of the States between each other, to change the residence of the Supreme powers of the Federacy, to arrange the interior administration of the Federal District and the Territories, to approve the budget of expenses of the Federacy and to asset the taxes necessary to meet them, to settle the bases enabling the Executive to raise loans on the National credit and to approve those loans, to acknowledge and order to pay the national debt, to settle tariffs on the foreign commerce, to establish the bases of mercantile legislation, to create and suppress public offices of the Federacy and to increase or diminish their endowments, to approve the treaties and diplomatic conventions concluded by the Executive, to declare war in view of the statements made by the Executive, to ratify



Francisco Zarco

the nominations of diplomatic Agents and consuls made by that same power, to ratify also the nominations of the upper officers of Finance, of the colonels and higher officers of the army and navy, to permit or to deny the entrance of foreign troops into the territory of the Republic, to raise and maintain the army and navy, to regulate the service of the national guard, to legislate about naturalisation and citizenship, to dictate laws about general ways of communication and posts and mails, to establish mints and so settle the conditions of coins, to adopt the general system of weights and measures, to legislate about occupation and alienation of unappropriated lands, to grant amnesties for offences submitted to the jurisdiction of the federal tribunals, to grant prizes or rewards for eminent services rendered the country or humanity, and to issue any law that might be necessary or suitable to render effective the foresaid faculties and all others granted unto the Powers of the Union.

During the recesses of Congress there will be a permanent Deputation composed of one deputy for each State and Territory whom Congress will name on the eve of the closure of the sessions. Among the few faculties bestowed on the permanent Deputation

the most important is that of decreeing by itself or at the suit of the Executive the convocation of Congress for extraordinary sessions.

The exercise of the Executive power of the Union is intrusted to one sole individual who is to be named *President of the Mexican United States*. The election of the President will be indirect in the first degree and by secret scrutiny, and the elected will enter office on the 1st of December and he will remain in office during four years.

To become President it is a requisite to be a Mexican citizen by birth, in full possession of his rights, thirty five years old at the time of the election, not belonging to the clergy and dwelling within the country when the election takes place.

During the temporary absences of the President of the Republic and the interval until the newly elected has got installed, the President of the Supreme Court of Justice is called to Power.

For the performance of the administrative affairs of the Federacy there will be the number of Secretaries Congress may establish by a law. The requisites to become a Secretary of State are: to be a Mexican citizen by birth, in the full use of his rights and over twenty five years old.

All the President's regulations, decrees and orders must be signed by the Secretary of State intrusted with the branch to which the matter corresponds. Without this requisite they will not be obeyed.

The President's main faculties and duties are: to promulgate and execute the laws issued by the Congress of the Union, providing their exact observance in the administrative sphere; to name and remove at will the



Escutcheon.—Relievo of the façade of the Penitentiary at Mexico

Secretaries of State, to remove the diplomatic agents and the superior Finance officers, to name and remove at will the other functionaries of the Union; to name, with the approval of Congress, the colonels and higher officers of the army and navy; to name the other officers of the army and navy according to the laws; to dispose of the permanent armed force by sea and land and of the national guard; to declare war after an act of the Congress of the Union, to direct the diplomatic negotiations and to conclude treaties with foreign powers, submitting the same to the ratification of the federal Congress; to receive ministers and other envoys of foreign

powers; and to grant, according to the laws, pardons on culprits doomed for offences of the competency of the federal tribunals.

The exercise of the Judicial Power of Federacy is deposited in a *Supreme Court of Justice* and in the District and Circuit Courts.

The Supreme Court of Justice will be composed of eleven proper ministers, four supernumeraries, one fiscal and one attorney-general. Each of the members of the Court will last in his office six years and his election will be indirect in the first degree.

To be eligible for a member of the Supreme Court of Justice it is necessary: to be instructed in Jurisprudence in the opinion of electors, to be more than thirty five years old and a Mexican citizen by birth in possession of his civic rights.

The Circuit and District Courts will be established and organised by the law.

The tribunals of the Federacy are cognizant: of all the controversies that may be suscitated about the observance and application of the federal laws, of those treating of maritime law, of such in which the Federacy is a party, of those suscitated between two or more States, of those roused between a State and one or more burghers of another, of those about civil or criminal matters suscitated in consequence of the treaties concluded with foreign powers, and of the causes referring to diplomatic agents and consuls.

The Supreme Court of Justice is cognizant, from the first suit, of the contentions suscitated by one State with another and of those in which the Union is a party. It is also incumbent on the Supreme Court to resolve the competencies suscitated between the tribunals of the Federacy, between these and those of the States or between the tribunals of one State and those of another. In the remaining cases comprised in the foregoing paragraph the Supreme Court will be a tribunal of appeal or of final judgment according to the graduation the law will establish in the competency of the Circuit and District Courts.

The Federal tribunals will resolve any controversy that may be suscitated: by laws or acts of any authority violating the individual rights, by laws or acts of the federal authority hurting or restraining the sovereignty of the States and by laws or acts of the authorities invading the sphere of competency of the federal authority.

All these actions (shelter) will be pursued at the petition of the damnified party, by means of juridical procedures and forms to be determined by a law.

The deputies to the Congress of the Union, the members of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Secretaries of State will be responsible for the common offences they may commit during the term of their office and for the misdeeds, faults or omissions incurred by them in the exercise of their office. The States' governors are responsible for any infraction of the Constitution and federal laws. So is also the President of the Republic; but during his term of office he may be indicted only for the crime of treason of his country, express violation of the Constitution, coercion of electoral liberty and grave common misdemeanours.

Of the office misdemeanours will be cognizant: Congress as a jury of indictment and the Supreme Court of Justice as a dooming jury. If the misdemeanour prove a common one, Congress will declare whether there is room for proceedings against the accused person. In the negative case there will be no reason for any further procedure; in the affirmative case the accused will be by the fact itself removed from office and subjected to the common tribunals.

The States will adopt for their inner management the form of a republican, representative, popular government.

In no case they will be allowed to: conclude an alliance, treaty or coalition with another State or a foreign power; issue marques for privateering, coin money, emit notes or stamps. Nor will they be allowed to establish port duties or importation and exportation taxes, hold permanent troops or war-ships, or make war by themselves to any foreign power.

Each State will deliver the criminals of other States to the authorities claiming them. In each State faith and credit will be given the public acts, registers and judicial proceedings of every other. The governors will be obliged to publish the federal laws and have them performed and the Union powers have the duty to shelter the States against any invasion or exterior violence; in the case of an interior rebellion, they will bestow them the same protection whenever they may be solicited by the respective Legislature or by the Governor during the period the Legislature does not meet.

The faculties not expressly granted the federal functionaries by the Constitution, are supposed to be reserved for the States.

No payment will be lawful unless it is comprised in the budget or determined by a posterior law.

On June 1st, 1858 all tolls and excises will be abolished throughout the Republic.

The Constitution, the acts of the Congress of the Union deriving therefrom, and all the treaties made or to be made by the President with the approval of Congress, will be the supreme law of the whole Union. The judges of each State will conform to the said Constitution, laws and treaties in spite of all contrary dispositions eventually contained in the Constitutions or laws of the States.

The Constitution may be amplified or reformed. The additions or reforms, in order to become a part of the Constitution, must be submitted to the Congress of the Union and obtain the votes of two thirds of the Deputies present and then these additions or reforms must be approved by the majority of the Legislatures of the States. The Union Congress will do the computation of the votes of the Legislatures and make the public declaration of the approval of those additions or reforms.

The Constitution will not lose its strength and vigour although its observance be interrupted by a rebellion. In the case of a public perturbation establishing a Government contrary to the principles sanctioned by the Constitution, the observance of this will be restored as soon as the people will recover its liberty and according to it and the laws issued in virtue of the same they will be doomed who may have formed part of the government derived from the rebellion and they who will have cooperated therein.



Pontianus Arriaga

Such is, in a faithful and needs extensive abstract, the political Code

discussed amid the effervescence of the parties, promulgated in February 1857 and forming, with the legally made reforms we shall state by and by, the supreme law of the Republic.

The liberal progressionist party brilliantly represented in the Constituent Congress was not allowed to consign to the Constitution several of the loftiest principles of their political creed, as is proven by the omission of all matters relative to religious worship. However, this concession did not satisfy the conservative party and the privileged classes and it was therefore that in the last days of that same year 1857 the bloodiest and most disastrous civil war ever suffered by the Republic broke out. Juarez and the liberal party succeeded in making the Constitution come out triumphant at the end of three years of a most murderous struggle, and during this war that great democrat issued the laws called *of Reform* which some years later and after fulfilling of all legal formalities were raised to the rank of constitutional prescriptions.

The splendid victory won by the defenders of the Constitution at the end of 1860 pushed the enemies

of liberty and Republic to the worst of political crimes and despitefully they had recourse to a foreign invasion. Already in the first months of 1862 the nation beheld herself invaded by a French army which aided by the clergy, by the most noted chiefs of the old army and by the wealthiest class of society, won costly triumphs over the Republic's brave soldiers, occupied the capital, subdued, always by force, a part of the national territory and erected a monarchy setting archduke Maximilian of Austria on the throne. The Mexican people, however, continued restively fighting; the invaders, shaken by so tenacious a resistance, retired without glory and profit in the first months of 1867; the throne raised by them and supported some time by the conservative party fell down together with the body of the illuded prince, tool of the invasion; and the Republic, victorious over her inward and outward foes, was fully restored in June of that same year 1867.

From that epoch of pure and legitimate glory for Mexico up to the present day, that is, during the last third of the xix century, the republican Constitution issued in 1857 has continued being valid in the country. We are going to state the reforms of our political Code that have been decreed with the formalities prescribed in the same and which have modified and enlarged it in the lapse of time we have just mentioned.

(Principles contained in the laws called of *Reform*, issued by President Juarez in 1859):

September 25th, 1873.—The State and the Church are independent of one another. Congress cannot dictate laws establishing or forbidding any religion.

Wedlock is a civil contract. This and all other acts of the civil state of persons are of the exclusive competency of the civil functionaries and authorities, in the terms prescribed by the laws and will have the force and validness bestowed on them by these laws.

No religious institution can acquire real estate or capitals invested thereon.

The simple promise to tell the truth and to fulfill the contracted obligations will supply the religious oath with its effects and penalties.

Nobody can be obliged to do personal labour without a just retribution and without his full assent. The State cannot allow the carrying into effect of any contract, pact or agreement having for its aim the reduction, loss or irrevocable sacrifice of a man's liberty, either for labour or education or a religious vow. The law, in consequence, does not recognise any monastic Orders, nor can it permit their establishment whatever may be the denomination or the purpose with which they pretend to settle. Nor is any agreement admissible by which a person compromises his or her proscription or banishment.

Reform of article 51 and the corresponding ones of the Constitution:

November 13th, 1874.—The Legislative Power of the Union is deposited in a general Congress which will be divided in two Chambers: one of deputies and another of senators.

That of deputies will be composed of representatives of the Nation elected in their totality every two years. The Chamber of Senators will be composed of two senators for every State and two for the Federal District. The election of senators will be indirect in the first degree, and the Legislature of every State will declare elected him who will have obtained the absolute majority of the votes emitted or will chose among those who will have obtained a relative majority.

The Senate will be renewed by half every two years. The senators named in the second place will cease at the end of the first biennial term and in successive order the elders.

To become a senator the same qualities are required as to become a deputy, with the exception of the age, which must be of thirty years on the day the sessions are opened...

The Chamber of senators cannot open its sessions nor exercise its office without the concurrence of two thirds of the members...

Congress will have every year two periods of ordinary sessions: the first, susceptible of prorogation up to thirty able days will begin on September 16th and end on December 15th and the second term susceptible of prorogation up to 15 available days, will begin on April 1st, ending on the last day of the month of May.

...The laws and decrees will be promulgated in this form: «The Congress of the Mexican United States decrees, etc.....»

The formation of laws and decrees may begin indistinctly in either Chamber, with the exception of the bills

referring to loans, taxes and imposts, or to recruiting of troops, all of which must be discussed at first in the Chamber of deputies. Any bill whose adoption does not depend exclusively on one of the Chambers will successively be discussed in both...

Both Chambers will reside in the same place and cannot be translated to another without a previous agreement about the conditions of the translation. ...Neither Chamber may suspend its sessions for more than three days without consent of the other...

Congress has the faculty:

III. To form new States within the boundaries of the existing ones whenever the pretending fraction has at least one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants and shows that it possesses the elements to provide for its political existence; the Legislatures whose territory is in stake must be heard; as well as the Executive of the



Mexico.—National Palace. Hidalgo saloon

Union; the settlement must be voted by two thirds of the deputies and senators present in their respective Chambers; the resolution of Congress must be ratified by the majority of the Legislatures of the States or by two thirds of the Legislatures, if that whose territory is at stake, were not agreeing...

Exclusive faculties of the Chamber of deputies are:

To constitute itself into an electoral College; to exercise the faculties the law assigns it regarding the nomination of the Constitutional President of the Republic, the Magistrates of the Supreme Court and the senators for the Federal District; to qualify and decide about the resignation and license solicited by the President and about the resignments the Magistrates of the Supreme Court may tender; to watch by means of the respective Commission the exact performance of the functions of the Accountant-General's office; to name the chiefs and other officials of same; to erect itself into a jury of indictment for the high functionaries according to article 103 of the Constitution; to examine the annual accounts tendered by the Executive; to approve the annual budget of expenses and to propose the taxes deemed necessary to meet the same.

The Senate's exclusive faculties are:

To approve the treaties and diplomatic conventions concluded by the Executive with the foreign powers; to

ratify the nominations the President of the Republic may have made of ministers, diplomatic agents, consuls general, higher officials of Finance, colonels and other upper chiefs of the army and navy; to authorise the Executive to permit the national troops to cross the frontiers of the Republic and foreign troops to pass through the national territory; to give their consent to the Executive's disposal of the national guard beyond the limits of their respective States; whenever the legislative and executive constitutional Powers of a State had disappeared, to declare there was occasion to name a provisory Governor who might convoke for elections according to the constitutional laws of that State, the nomination of such a Governor being made by the Federal Executive and approved by the Senate or, during its recesses, by the Permanent Commission; and to resolve the political



Leo Guzman

questions that may arise between the powers of a State, one of them applying to the Senate therefor, or when because of the said questions the constitutional order has been interrupted through an armed conflict. In such a case the Senate will dictate its resolution in accordance with the general Constitution of the Republic and the particular one of the State.

Each of the Chambers, without any intervention of the other, may:

Dictate economical resolutions relative to its interior management; communicate with the Executive of the Union by means of Commissions named thereto; nominate their secretaries and settle the interior regulations of their office, and issue convocations for extraordinary elections with the aim of filling up the vacancies among their respective members.

During the recesses of Congress there will be a Permanent Commission composed of twenty nine members, fifteen of whom will be deputies and fourteen senators named by their respective Chambers on the eve of the closure of their sessions.

It is incumbent on the Permanent Commission:

II. To resolve by itself or after a proposal of the Executive's, hearing it in the former case, the convocation of Congress or of either Chamber for extraordinary sessions, in either case being wanted the vote of two thirds of the members present. The convocation edict must state the object or objects of the extraordinary sessions...

...The high functionaries of the Federation enjoy no constitutional privileged jurisdiction

for the misdemeanours, faults or omissions incurred by them during the performance of any employment, charge or public commission they may have accepted during the period in which according to law such a privilege is enjoyed. The same thing will happen with regard to the common offences they may commit during the performance of the said employment, charge or commission.

Of official misdemeanours will be cognizant: the Chamber of Deputies as an indictment jury and that of Senators as a dooming jury...

(Among the constitutional reforms exacted by the division of the legislative power of the Union in two chambers we have omitted those which only modified the relative articles of the Constitution of 1857 by adding the word senator or senators. We have also suppressed in this part the reformed articles referring to the constitutional procedures for the formation of the laws).

May 5th, 1878. — Reform of articles 78 and 109 of the Constitution:

The President will enter into office on December 1st and will continue therein four years not being capable to be reelected for the next term nor to occupy the Presidency for whatsoever motive, unless four years have elapsed since he ceased in the exercise of his functions.

The States... in their respective Constitutions will determine the conditions under which the reelection of their Governors will be forbidden.

The character of Governor of a State, whatever the titles may be by which he wields power, is incompatible at any rate with his election for the next term. The local Constitutions will define this precept in the terms the Legislatures may deem fit.

May 17th, 1882.—Reform of article 124 of the Constitution:

By December 1st, 1884, at the latest, the tolls and excises will be abolished in the District and Territories of the Federation and in the States that have not suppressed them before.

June 2nd, 1882.—Reform of articles 72 and 85 of the Constitution:

Congress has faculty: to grant prizes or rewards for eminent services done to the country or to humanity.

—The President of the Republic has faculty: to grant exclusive privileges for a limited time and in conformity to the respective law, on the discoverers, inventors, or improvers of any branch of industry.

October 3^d, 1882.—Reform of articles 79, 80 and 82 of the Constitution:

In the temporary absences of the President of the Republic and in the absolute one until the newly elected will take office, the Executive Power of the Union will be wielded by the citizen having performed the charge of president or vice-president of the Senate, or of the Permanent Commission in the periods of recess during the month before these absences happened.

(This reform became nullified by the one decreed on April 24th, 1896).

May 15th, 1883.—Reform of article 7 of the Constitution:

The liberty to write and publish writings about any matter is inviolable. No law and no authority can ever establish previous censure or exact bail from authors or publishers, or restrain the liberty of the press which has no other limits than the respect of private life, morality and public peace. *The offences committed by means of the press will be judged by the competent courts of the Federation or by those of the States, the Federal District and the Territory of Lower California according to penal legislation.*

December 14th, 1883.—Reform of paragraph X of article 72 of the Constitution:

Congress has faculty: to issue codes obligatory throughout the Republic, of mining and commerce comprising in this last the bank establishments.

May 29th, 1884.—Reform of paragraph 1st of article 97 of the Constitution:

The Federal Courts are cognizant: of all the controversies that may be suscitated about the fulfilment and application of the federal laws, *excepting the case that this application affects only the interests of particular persons, then being cognizant the common local judges and courts of the States, Federal District and Territory of Lower California.*

November 25th, 1884.—Reform of article 124 of the Constitution:

By December 1st, 1886, at the latest, the tolls and excises will be abolished in the Federal District and Territories and in the States where they are not yet suppressed. (This reform is related with the following).

December 22nd, 1886.—Reform of article 124 of the Constitution:

The States will not be allowed to impose any duty for the mere transit of goods by inland circulation. Only the Government of the Union may decree transit duties but solely on foreign goods crossing the country by international or interoceanic lines, not remaining in the national territory more time than the necessary one for crossing and going abroad.

They will not prohibit directly or indirectly the importation into, or the exportation from, their territory of any merchandise unless for police grounds, nor will they tax the articles of national production at their departure for a foreign country or another State.

The exemptions from duty they may grant will be general ones, and it will not be lawful to decree any in behalf of the products of a determined origin.

The rate of impost on a determined merchandise will be the same, whatever its origin may be, and it must not be charged with heavier duties than those laid on similar fruits of the political entity where the impost is decreed.

National merchandise cannot be subjected to a determined rout or to inspection or examination on the roads, nor can any fiscal document be exacted for its inland circulation.

They will not burden a foreign merchandise with a heavier rate than that whose exaction has been consented by the federal law.



Michael Auza

October 21st, 1887.—Reform of articles 78 and 109 of the Constitution:

The President will enter upon office on December 1st and will continue therein four years, being reeligible for the next constitutional term; but he will be incapable to exercise Presidency by a new election unless four years have elapsed since the day he left office.

The States... in their respective Constitutions, may establish the reeligibility of the Governors, in conformity with what is settled in article 78 regarding the President of the Republic.

December 30th, 1890.—Reform of article 78 of the Constitution:

The President will enter upon his functions on December 1st and will continue therein four years. (This reform annulled the preceding one and reproduces the primitive precept of the Constitution promulgated in 1857).

April 24th, 1896.—Reform of articles 79, 80, 82 and 83 and addition to article 72 of the Constitution:

Congress has faculty: to nominate, both Chambers meeting, a President of the Republic either with the character of substitute or that of provisory, in the absolute or temporary absences of the constitutional President and to qualify and decide the solicitation of license eventually tendered by the President of the Republic.

It is an exclusive faculty of the Chamber of deputies to qualify and decide the resignments of the President of the Republic and the Magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice.

In the absolute absence of the President, excepting when it is due to resignation and in the temporary ones, excepting when due to license, the Executive Power will be wielded forthwith by the Foreign Secretary and if there were no such present or he were hindered, by the Home Secretary.

The Congress of the Union will meet in extraordinary session on the following day, in the hall of the Chamber of deputies... and will elect by nominal and public votation a substitute President... If Congress is not holding

sessions it will meet, needing no convocation edict, on the 14th day after that of the absence under the direction of the board of the Permanent Commission then officiating.

As for the temporary absences, whatever their cause may be, Congress will name a provisory President... The President, soliciting a license, will propose the citizen he deems fit to supply him... The provisory President will perform his functions only as long as the temporary absence will last... If the President's absence had become an absolute one, the substitute named by Congress will continue to the end of the Constitutional term.

To be a substitute President as well as to be a provisory one it is indispensable to fulfill the requisites established by article 77 of the Constitution.

The President when entering upon his functions will protest before Congress under the formula prescribed by the Constitution, this requisite not being exacted from the Secretary of State eventually intrusted in a provisional manner with the Executive Power.

May 1st, 1896.—Reform of paragraph III of article 111, addition to that article and reform of article 124 of the Constitution:

The States will not be allowed: to coin money, to emit paper money, stamps or marked paper, to impose transit duties on persons or goods crossing their territory; to prohibit or directly or indirectly lay duty on entrance into, or departure out of, their territory of any national or foreign merchandise; to assess the circulation or consumption of national or foreign commodities with imposts or duties whose exaction is effectuated by local custom-houses, requires inspection or examination of packs, or needs cockets accompanying the goods; to issue or enact fiscal laws or dispositions implying differences of imposts or examinations by reason of the origin of national or foreign merchandise, whether the difference be established in view of the similar production of the locality or between analogous productions of distinct origin.

It is the exclusive faculty of the Federacy to impose the goods imported or passing by transit through the national territory as also to regulate and even to forbid, for motives of security or police, the circulation in the interior of the Republic of all sorts of goods whatever their origin may be, but for the Federacy itself it will not be lawful to establish or dictate, in the Federal District and Territories, the imposts and laws expressed in the paragraphs VI and VII of article 111.

June 10th, 1898.—Reform of articles 5, 31 and 35 of the Constitution:

Nobody can be obliged to do personal labour without just retribution and without his full consent save the labour imposed as a penalty by the judicial authority.

As for the public services, they can be compulsory only within the terms established by the respective laws regarding the service in the army, and the gratuitous functions as elector, councillor and juror.

Every Mexican is obliged... to do service in the army or National Guard, in conformity to the respective organic laws... The citizen's prerogatives are: taking arms in the Army or National Guard for the defence of the Republic or her institutions, in the terms prescribed by the laws...

The constituent Congress told the Mexican people in the manifesto addressed so same on February 5th 1857: «If you want ampler liberties than those bestowed on you by the fundamental Code, you may obtain them by legal and pacific means. If you believe, on the contrary, that the power of authority needs more extent and strength, you may pacificly attain that result...» The reforms which the fundamental Code of the Republic has legally and pacificly received provide for the political and economical necessities which the patriots legislators of 1857 could not possibly satisfy, and they are inspired, some by the aspiration to enjoy more freedom and others by the conveniency demonstrated by practice of strengthening the action of the public powers delegates of the popular sovereignty consecrated by the Constitution. For the rest, the political Code of the Mexican Nation got identified with the noble cause of independence, for the most ardent adversaries of the former, in order to destroy it, did not vacillate in calling over their country the horrors of the foreign invasion; and when the Mexican people, a third of century ago, fully restored the national independence, it also restored the constitutional order securing the liberty and the rights of all. The political institutions adopted by Mexico exercising her sovereignty have presided over and efficaciously assisted the development of the national greatness and prosperity and they who were enemies thereof in not very remote an epoch do invoke them to-day as a safeguard of their interests and their securities.



Morelia.—Government Palace of the State of Michoacan

CHAPTER II

STATES OF THE MEXICAN FEDERACY

STATES OF THE MEXICAN FEDERACY. COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THEIR IMPORTANCE ACCORDING TO THEIR
POPULATION AND THE DIVERS ELEMENTS OF THEIR WEALTH AND PROSPERITY

THE Federacy established by the republican Constitution of 1824 was deemed an artificial and hardly viable work by the partisans of centralism who in Mexico have always been the enemies of democratic institutions. Certainly, none of the States then founded had the special conditions of particularism possessed by each of the colonies formed by the English emigrants in North-America and which concerted the federative pact in order to fight against the mother-country and afterwards to erect the federal republic of the United States; but it cannot be denied that the new federative entities proclaimed in the first political constitution of Mexico and acknowledged in that of 1857, entered political life with habits, conditions and interests of their own which developing in the course of time would assure their inner management and administration, endowing them with an independent existence, strengthening in the inhabitants of each of them the energetic and fecund feeling of locality without lessening their love for the common fatherland or their tried adhesion to the national unity.

A share in preparing the Federacy erected in 1824 must be allowed, in the first place, to the old administrative division established during the Spanish dominion, and which the founders of the Republic wisely adopted transforming nearly all the old provinces into States and secondly to the most different geographical conditions of the vast Mexican territory which obliged those men to form new political entities within the too extensive area of several of the old provinces. The vitality of the federal system is proved, among other facts, by the most important one that the several times centralism was dominant

the territorial integrity of each of the suppressed States was respected; their name was changed being called *Departments*, their political and administrative organisation was substituted by an absolute dependency on the centre carried into effect by means of a high military authority; however, we repeat, the territorial integrity of the old States was maintained, because even the most ardent centralists shrank from the rude task of dismembering and disuniting what custom, all sorts of interests and even the geographical conditions had joined into a compact and united bunch.

For the rest, time has consolidated the Federacy that might seem premature in 1824. About eighty years of federal system (excluding the few years centralism was domineering) have formed already a most powerful tradition in each of the States of the Mexican Union; all have a history and titles of their own their children have a right to be proud of and in all of them there exists that lively feeling of particularism missed by the partisans of the central system in the first beginnings of the Republic.

The Constitution of 1857 recognised as integrant parts of the Mexican Federacy twenty four States and one Territory which we have enumerated in the preceding chapter. Since then up to this day, that is, during the forty three years that separate us from the promulgation of that fundamental Code, the number of the States has increased and a new Territory has been erected in the western part of the Republic.

The State of *Campeachy* dismembered from that of Yucatan was erected by decree of April 29th, 1863.

By decree of November 18th, 1868, the State of *Coahuila of Zaragoza* was severed from the State admitted in the Constitution of 1857 under the name of New Leon and Coahuila.

The State of *Hidalgo* formed with the northern part of the State of Mexico was created by decree of January 15th, 1869.

Another dismemberment of the State of Mexico appeared among those of the Confederacy with the name of State of *Morelos* in virtue of the decree of April 16th, 1869.

And, finally, with the VII canton of the State of Jalisco the Territory of *Tepic* was formed by decree of December 12th 1884. In the constitutional reform of that date the new Territory and the four States aforementioned were comprised.

Thus, to-day, the integrant parts of the Federacy are: the States of Aguascalientes, Campeachy, Coahuila, Colima, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacan, Morelos, New Leon, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Valley of Mexico, Veracruz, Yucatan and Zacatecas and the Territories of Lower California and Tepic.

The State of Valley of Mexico, according to article 46 of the Constitution will be formed with the territory comprehended in the Federal District; but the erection will be effected only when the Supreme federal Powers will be transferred to another spot; this translation not having been carried into effect up to this day the *Federal District* occupies the place of the promised State of the Valley of Mexico and depends directly, in the political and administrative spheres, in the same way as the two Territories do, on the supreme government of the Federacy.

The States, according to the constitutional precepts may settle their respective limits by friendly agreements between each other, but these arrangements cannot be carried into effect without the approval of the Congress of the Union. Nor can the States, without the consent of Congress, establish tonnage or port charges, lay taxes or duties on imports and exports, ever keep permanent troops or men of war, make war by themselves to a foreign Power except in the case of invasion or of so impendent a danger that it admits of no delay.

The other constitutional precepts relating to the States have been mentioned in the preceding chapter.

For their administration and inner management the States are divided into districts at the head of which there is a functionary named *political chief*. In Jalisco and Veracruz those political and administrative divisions are called *cantons*; in Chiapas *departments*; and in Tabasco, Campeachy, Yucatan, Durango, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí and Colima they are denominated *parties*. The State

of New Leon divides its territory into 48 municipalities, each of which is directly governed by a municipal president under the superior authority of the State's Government.

The States of the North frontier Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila which together with New Leon and Tamaulipas form the extensive northern zone bordering on the United States of America, have the largest surface of all the States of the Mexican Confederation; but the number of their respective inhabitants does not correspond with the vast extent of the territory. The best peopled part of the Republic spreads

at the South of the parallel of 23° of boreal latitude as far as the bordering line that in the Southeast separates it from Guatemala.

In this southern half of the Mexican territory *Jalisco*, stands out being the State of biggest absolute population (1,107,000 inhabitants, according to the general census of 1895); abounding in rich and various produce of agriculture and mining, having many manufactures of divers industries whose number is incessantly increasing, this State ruled with cleverness and patriotic honesty during these last years, is doubtlessly the most important one of the Federacy and its capital Guadalajara country at the present moment 100,000 inhabitants, is the most remarkable town of the Occident of the Republic.

Almost in the centre of the Mexican territory there is the State of *Guanajuato*, of a not very extensive superficies, but the second in population (1,062,551 inhabitants). Mining is the main fountain of its wealth; manufactural industry has developed powerfully these few



San Luis Potosí.—Palace of the State's Government

years in some of the numerous and important towns that rise on its soil and the extensive plain of the Bajío is justly renowned for its opulent agricultural produce. At the east of this State there is the smallest of all, that of *Querétaro*, agricultural and mining.

The State of *Mexico*, which involves the Federal District on all sides excepting in the South where it confines with the State of Morelos, was once of large extent and the most peopled of the Republic; dismembered in 1869 by the successive formation and legal settlement of the States of Hidalgo and Morelos and before that date by the separation of a considerable portion forming at present part of the State of Guerrero, it remains, notwithstanding, one of the most important of the Republic's (842,000 inhabitants). Agriculture and mining are the main sources of wealth of this State; industry is acquiring greater development every day; public instruction is spreading throughout its territory and all the elements of moral and intellectual advance, as also every improvement in the material sphere are implanted and fostered with a never tired activity by the worthy and patriotic functionary who has been governing

the State of Mexico these ten years. We have already stated that this political entity of the Confederation surrounds the *Federal District* on the West, North and East. Toward South-east there is the small State of *Morelos*, very wealthy through the agricultural produce of the warm zone in which it is situated and towards the North we find the more extensive State of *Hidalgo*, the first mining State of the Republic (558,000 inhabitants).

At the East of Hidalgo, Mexico and Morelos the State of *Puebla* extends (984,000 inhabitants), being the most industrial one of the Union and one of the foremost by its population and the corn-crops of its well cultivated territory. The capital, Puebla (100,000 inhabitants), is a most beautiful town, the second of the Republic, and its name is linked with glorious records for the Mexican country. The small State of *Tlaxcala*, agricultural, is nearly wholly enclosed by that of Puebla, for only with a small portion of its not extensive perimeter it touches the States of Mexico and Hidalgo.

At the North of Jalisco and encircled by a very irregular perimeter the State of *Zacatecas* is spreading (453,000 inhabitants). Mining is the main source of its wealth and the districts most abounding in silver mines are those of the Centre (*Zacatecas*), *Fresnillo*, *Sombrerete* and *Mazapil*. The small State of *Aguascalientes* is surrounded on the East, North and West by the State of *Zacatecas* and confines with that of *Jalisco* in the Southern direction.

The State of *Durango* is the northernmost and also the largest of the States comprised in the central region of the Republic. Its population



Guadalajara. Government Palace of the State of Jalisco

(290,000 inhabitants) is spread over a superficies that measures one hundred thousand square kilometres and it is easily to be understood why this federal entity has not advanced as yet in proportion to the numerous elements of prosperity its soil contains. The western half of Durango is occupied by lofty and rough branches of the Sierra-Madre abounding in minerals, while in the grounds of the eastern half watered by the Nazas, the cotton plant is thriving amid other products of that interesting portion of the Mexican territory.

At the end of our brief description of the central or interior States we must still mention that of *San Luis Potosí* (570,000 inhabitants), situated at the North of the States of Hidalgo, Querétaro and Guanajuato and which is of great importance for its abundant elements of every kind.

In the region of the Mexican Gulf the most northern part is occupied by the State of *Tamaulipas*, which must be counted also among the northern frontier States being separated from the United States of America by a considerable portion of the course of the river Bravo (or Grande). The population of this State (206,000 inhabitants) is very scanty regarding its vast superficies. Agriculture and the breeding of life stock, cattle, horses and mules, are the occupations of the people of this federal entity.

At the South of Tamaulipas and following the outline of the Gulf in a South-eastern direction the

the State of *Veracruz* is stretching out, from the right border of the Pánuco as far as the river Taconchapa which divides it from the State of Tabasco. It has 806,000 inhabitants and as much by this big population as by the multiple elements of wealth and the tried patriotism of its sons in the ill-fated epochs of foreign invasions and civil contentions, this State occupies a very distinguished place among the most important ones of the Union. The bent of this State's soil, from the central Plateau where its limits reach on the western side, towards the burning shores of the Gulf, assure it the various agricultural products of the cold, temperate and hot climates; the port of Veracruz, the first of the Republic's and the railways that cross its territory, facilitate commerce and the numerous manufactures that are to be found at Orizaba and at Jalapa will place it in a short time at the head of the most industrious States of the Republic.

Between the south-eastern end of the State of Veracruz and that of Campeachy there is the not very extensive State of *Tabasco* with 135,000 inhabitants. Its ardent soil watered by plentiful rivers is most fertile; agriculture and exportation commerce are the main fountains of wealth of Tabasco. With its South-eastern end this State confines with the Republic of Guatemala.

The peninsula of Yucatan which marks the oriental extremity of our Republic comprises two States: that of *Campeachy* and that of *Yucatan*. The former (90,000 inhabitants) extends over nearly the whole western half of the peninsula and confines with Yucatan, Tabasco and the Republic of Guatemala; its inhabitants export *campeachy* or logwood and the abundant salinas of the coast form an important branch of commerce. The State of *Yucatan* (300,000 inhabitants) occupies the largest part of the peninsula of the same name, confining on the West with Campeachy and on the South with the neighbour nation of Guatemala; the river Hondo in a small part of its course sunders it from the English colony Belize. The inhabitants of the State whose number we have stated occupy the northern part, for the extent from the 20° of N. latitude up to the southern boundary of the State, that is to say half the territory is dominated by the Maya Indians rid of obedience to the laws of the Republic and living in continual hostility with the civilised population of the peninsula. In the hot Yucatec soil magney is cultivated yielding *henequen*, a valuable fibre exported by the State in large quantities and forming the main stock of its industry and public wealth.

More extensive than the Gulf region is that of the Pacific and beginning at the south east extremity we remark at first the State of *Chiapas* (319,000 inhabitants) bordering on Guatemala by its eastern side and possessing a soil of an amazing fertility. At the West of this State that of *Oaxaca* (885,000 inhabitants) is spreading occupying by its population and considerable area one of the first places among the federative entities of Mexico. The natives of this State have always distinguished themselves by their ardent patriotism and their love for liberty. It is also remarkable for the richness of its soil both in metals and in agricultural produce, among which we may point out as of surpassing importance coffee, indigo, sugar cane, cotton and other much esteemed and valuable plants. The isthmus of Tehuantepec is comprised for the greater part of its extent within the territory of Oaxaca and the northern region of the isthmus up to where it ends on the shore of the Gulf runs near the divisionary line between the States of Veracruz and Tabasco.

At the West of Oaxaca there is the State of *Guerrero* (420,000 inhabitants) crossed in its whole breadth by the great cordillera named *Sierra-Madre del Sur* and abounding in a great variety of rich minerals. The ardent clima of this part of the Republic renders it distinguished for its amazing fertility and the railway already crossing a considerable part of that territory and which in a short time will unite the capital of the Nation with the port of Acapulco, will facilitate the development of the incalculable elements of wealth possessed by the fatherland of the Mexican hero Vincent Guerrero.

Very short is the littoral of the State of *Michoacan* washed by the Pacific Ocean, but its extensive territory widening towards the centre of the Republic, its considerable population (about 900,000 inhabitants), the fertility and richness of the soil, and the patriotism of the Michoacause in the epochs of greatest jeopardy for national independence and freedom, secure this State one of the most distinguished

places in the Mexican Confederacy. At the east and provided with a longer coast line there is the small State of *Colima*, the least peopled of all the States of the Union (56,000 inhabitants).

Beyond the coast of *Jalisco* (although this State is also comprised in the region of the Pacific we have placed it at the head of this brief survey because of its notorious and undisputed importance) the shore of the *Tepic* Territory extends as far as the mouth of Canas river. This portion (150,000 inhabitants) dependent on the Supreme federal Government was sundered from the State of *Jalisco* in December 1884.

The State of *Sinaloa* (259,000 inhabitants) is comprised in a broad band or zone stretching from North-west to South-east, between *Sonora* and the Territory of *Tepic*, its breadth being determined on the eastern side by the cordillera of *Sierra Madre* which separates it from *Durango* and on the western side by the waters of the Gulf or Sea of *Cortés* formed in the Pacific Ocean by the long peninsula of Lower *California*. Agriculture and mining are the chief elements of prosperity in *Sinaloa*.

Región of the North is the name of the very extensive region that comprises the States bordering on the great North-American Republic, three of them being those of the



Jalapa. — Government Palace of the State of Veracruz

largest surface in the Confederacy. *Sonora* (190,000 inhabitants) has a territory of two hundred thousand square kilometers and innumerable mines of a great variety of rich metals. *Chihuahua* (262,000 inhabitants) is the most extensive State of the Republic stretching over two hundred and thirty thousand square kilometers; it possesses many and important minerals and as for agriculture, there are there extensive cultivations of cotton and, on a smaller scale, of vine, this being destined to be soon one of the best elements of *Chihuahua*. At the East there follows the State of *Coahuila* (241,000 inhabitants), also very vast in area and with great expectations of future prosperousness for the plenty of rich produce of its soil. Continuing our survey in the Eastern direction we come to the State of *New Leon* (315,000 inhabitants) of less extent than the three large boundary States we have just named, but perhaps the most important one among them at this date for the remarkable development of all its means of wealth and prosperity, at the impulsion of its clever and progressionist governor. *Tamaulipas* which also may be comprehended in the region of the North, has been enumerated among the States washed by the Gulf of Mexico).

At last, the lengthy peninsula of *Lower California*, that separates the Pacific Ocean from the Gulf or Sea of *Cortés* (Gulf of *California* on English maps), forms the Territory of its name and its considerable superficies of one hundred and fifty five thousand square kilometers contains the scanty population of 43,000 inhabitants busy in mining and fishing.



Chapultepec. — Drawing room

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN RELATIONS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF MEXICO UNTIL THE FAILURE OF THE FRENCH INTERVENTION.
NEW AND STRONG BASES SETTLED BY THE REPUBLIC FOR RENEWING AND ESTABLISHING ITS RELATIONS
WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND COUNTRIES. PRESENT STATE OF THESE RELATIONS

THE appearance of Mexico among the independent nations coincided with an actually extraordinary historical period, a characteristic sign of which was a reactionary feeling impelling the governments and even several of the peoples of the Old World. Napoleon had just died after six years of captivity and the kings who had allied to put him down, vigilant and watchful while the great vanquished continued a prisoner, deemed not their mission ended when the Prometheus of modern times expired on St. Helena rock.

For the French nation, the illustrious and prestigious captain who steered her destinies during sixteen years intoxicating her with military glory and elating her with the fulgency of triumph, was a despot who repressed liberty with an iron hand; for the old dynasties he so often trampled and vanquished he was but the armipotent and ireful executor of the revolution that had proclaimed the principle of popular sovereignty and the downfall of the old social and political order. The kings, tightly united against their common enemy and helped in their task of putting him down by the weariness and disenchantment of France herself, the dreadful conqueror once overthrown and captive, those monarchs of divine right joined still closer to crush in the cradle any revolutionary attempt and formed the *Holy Alliance*

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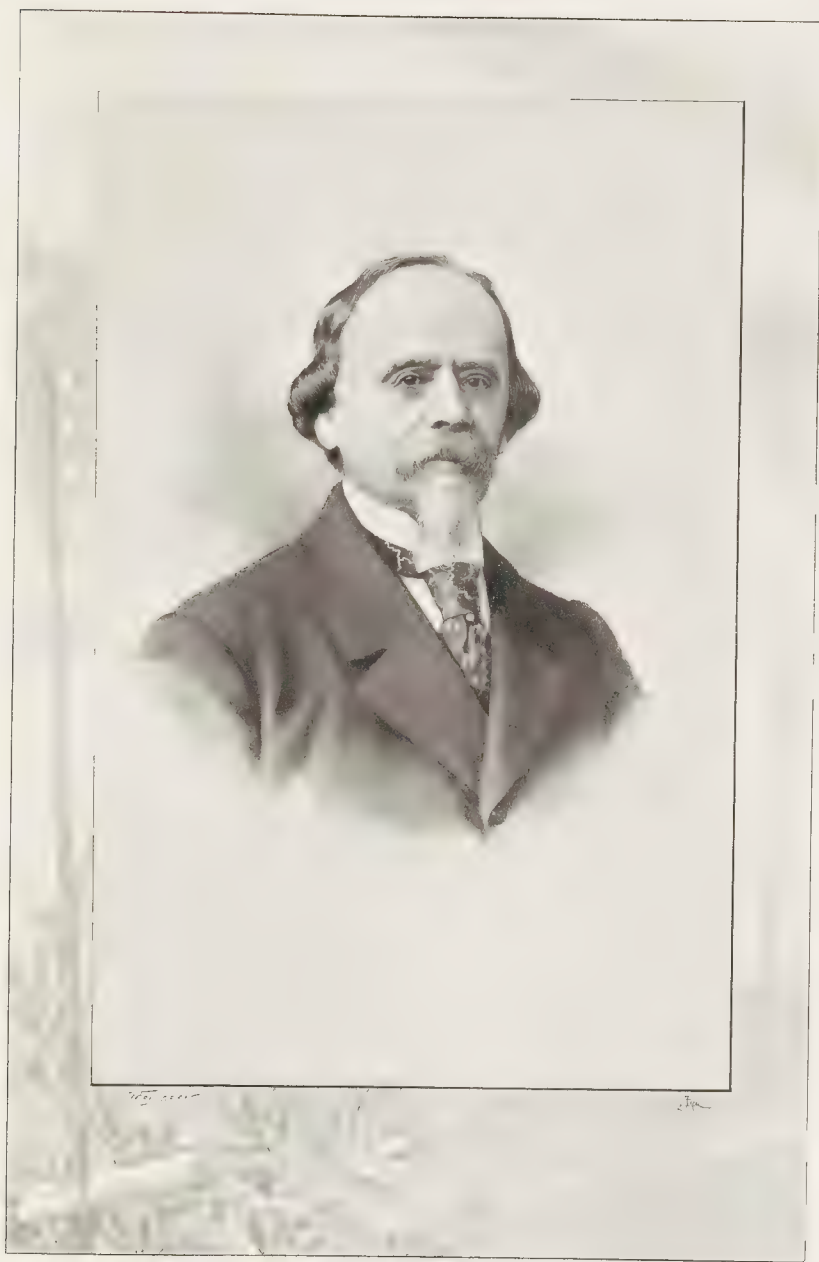
Political institutions

Lic. Ignatius Mariscal

SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



a pact agreed in the name of God for the welfare of humanity and wherein the crowned signers promised each other mutual assistance declaring they were fathers joining to dispose by themselves what they might deem suitable for their children who were not to become aware of anything. And bold by the unexpected advantage they had obtained the great Powers took the lion's share for themselves; the complex questions laid before the Congress of Vienna were resolved by personal considerations; their decisions were to be reclaimed thereafter by princes and peoples and while the revolutionary principle lay lethargic under the weight of the defeat the colligated kings used and abused their victory.

The rising in arms of all the Spanish-American peoples against their old mother country could not be viewed otherwise by the then arbiters of universal politics but as an execrable insurrection of ungrateful subjects. With still greater anger they looked on the Spanish liberals rising against the absolutism of Ferdinand VII and obliging him to swear the Constitution of 1812, and so the Congress of Verona composed of the allied kings and their ministers intrusted the restored French Bourbons with the fulfilment of their liberticidal decrees: one hundred thousand French soldiers commanded by the duke of Angoulême and invoking the name of St. Lewis, as Lewis XVIII pedantically stated, crossed the Pyrenees (1823) and restored Ferdinand in his absolute rule which he enjoyed up to his death practising during ten years the most ferocious and dismal despotism.

Mexico entered upon her independent and free life without finding friends among the monarchic governments; without rousing sympathies in the European peoples always ignorant and contemptuous, and then more so than now, of the things and events of Latin America; without asking or owing the neighbouring Republic of the North, emancipated and constituted ever since forty years before, howsoever small an aid during her fight with Spain. This, the former mother country, having no more among her statesmen a marquis of La Ensenada, a Florida Blanca or an Aranda, but such mediocres as the caprice of Ferdinand VII raised to the rank of Councillors of the Monarchy, persisted in her awkward and arduous endeavour of reconquering the most valuable and most important of her former colonies in America and after some years of threats, intrigues and preparations general Barradas was sent with a division, in 1829, this invasion being vanquished and undone by the Republican arms, as soon as the enemies set their feet on the national territory. Seven years later (1836), when Ferdinand's widow, Queen Maria Christina of Bourbon, was ruling the Spanish monarchy, the state of war between Mexico and her former dominatrix ceased by means of a treaty of peace and friendship agreed upon between Santa Maria plenipotentiary of the Republic and Calatrava then head of the Spanish ministry.

Thus, fifteen years had elapsed since the consummation of the independence of Mexico in 1821 until the end of the state of war with Spain and during that period the Spaniards residing on our soil laboured under persecutions and vexations derived from hateful and unjust proscription laws inspired by the exasperation of a young nation eager to conserve her independence continually threatened by those who had been her rulers; and the frequent bombardments of Veracruz from the fortified islet of Ulua and the abortive conspiracy of father Arenas and the expedition commanded by Barradas and more than one plot against the liberty of the nation quite explain that most vehement animosity against Spain and the Spaniards. But what is not so easily explained is the blindness of the ruling men of that country stubbornly bent on the foolish enterprise of an impossible reconquest, deaf for the dictates of reason and good sense, impassible in front of the peril to which they exposed their countrymen residing in Mexico and not deviating from their unreasonable hostility to the young Republic even by the elemental consideration that a tardy peace might stop the state of war but not the resentment between two nations of the same blood. The treaty of 1836, in fact, did not sensibly change those reciprocal rancours.

The spirit and bias of the *Holy Alliance* became clearly manifest by the French government's attitude towards the new Spanish-American Republic. Charles X, enthroned in 1824, and pressed by the instances of the French merchants settled here to enter upon official relations with Mexico, employed the subterfuge of having the French consuls and commercial agents named by subaltern functionaries and not by the Government presided over by himself as the sovereign, in order that neither Ferdinand VII nor the *Holy*

Alliance might reclaim against the French monarchy for entering into relations with people they considered rebels. The Republic quite rightfully refused the first French consul-general who presented himself without a due nomination and somewhat later on, the same Government of France accredited in due form the consuls of that nation who were to exercise their functions in Mexico. Under the reign of Louis Philippe inaugurated in 1830 the diplomatic relations got confirmed and further on we shall state the series of difficulties that arose between both governments.

More frankly hostile was the attitude of the Roman Court and in the famous encyclical letter issued by Pontiff Leo XII the American clergy was made aware of the necessity that the authority of Ferdinand VII should be restored in the Spanish-American countries that had just conquered their independence, it being worthy of remark that at the same time the Mexican clergy was suggested the idea it would be better to return under the dominion of the mother country, the Pope author of the said encyclical letter entered into a correspondence with Bolivar the president of the Republic of Columbia and confirmed the nominations of bishops the illustrious South-American patriot had proposed for the dioceses of his country.

One great European Power, of all those allied against Napoleon, had declared herself adversary of the intervention doctrine of the *Holy Alliance*: England refused to associate in that league of the kings of divine right deeming it incompatible with the liberty of the nations and when the Verona Congress resolved Spain should be invaded to restore absolutism, the English cabinet and parliament vigorously protested against the intervention dogma.

Canning was the most remarkable of the ministers who succeeded lord Castlereagh in office not long after the Verona Congress had decided to intervene in Spain in behalf of the absolutism of Ferdinand VII and in order to withstand the action of the other great Powers the talented English statesman resolved to put the influence of his powerful nation on the side of the new American Republics. «I have looked for the compensation in another hemisphere,—he said in a famous speech,—endeavouring to hinder France after possessing herself of Spain, from getting hold also of the Indies. So I have called the New World into life in order to restore the equilibrium in the Old one...»

In fact, reducing the hyperbolic affirmation of the prime minister of Great Britain to its just limits, it cannot be denied that the establishment of official relations effected by him between the English Government and the new American republics was a most hard blow struck at the *Holy Alliance*; but at the bottom of that international policy so briskly inaugurated by Canning English utilitarianism was stirring, anxious to monopolise the enormous vantages commerce and industry might derive from official relations with so many peoples whom the other great Powers were resolved to doom to insulation and death. It was not long before a treaty of friendship and commerce was concluded at London between Mexico and Great Britain, our inept diplomatists of those times incurring in the absurdity of establishing an impossible reciprocity between the two nations and committing the blunder to give the treaty a character of perpetuity necessarily harmful for the development of the Mexican merchant marine. The acknowledgment of the independence of Mexico by the English Government and the said treaty attracted to our country big English capitals that were applied to the working of mines.

In order to frustrate any project of intervention in America from the side of the great Powers, Minister Canning asked (in August 1823) the representative of the United States of America accredited at the British Court, whether his government would consent to go accordant with the English government and issue a declaration against the attempts of any European Power hostile to the independence of the former Spanish colonies. This hint was transmitted to Mr. J. Monroe, then president of the American Union, who took it forthwith and in his message of December 4th of that year he made the famous declaration for ever connected with his name and which substantially expressed that «the United States of America would consider as a manifestation of hostile feelings and dangerous for their tranquillity and security any attempt made by the allied Powers to extend their dominion over any part of the New Continent, as also any intervention aiming at suppressing the new States that had proclaimed and maintained their independence or to exercise any influence whatever on their destinies.»

This declaration, afterwards called *Monroe doctrine*, was unable to hinder the attempts at reconquest made by Spain and we have already stated that the expedition under the command of brigadier Barradas, in 1829, was undone by the valour and patriotism of the Mexicans, the government of the United States not doing anything, on that occasion, to keep up their arrogant declaration of 1823. On the other hand, the Monroe doctrine, in the run of time, was accepted by the numerous partisans of North-American expansion as a symbol of the policy of *manifest destiny* expressed with the easy and amphibological phrase: *America for the Americans*.

To close this part of the rapid sketch we have been tracing we must still mention general Bolivar's thought formulated in his project to constitute, in the geographical centre of the American republics, a Congress composed of representatives of all of them, charged to determine the policy to be observed against that which in Europe the great Powers forming the *Holy Alliance* pretended to pursue in detriment of the republics. The resistance opposed by Buenos Aires to forming part of the assembly and the reserve of the United States to intervene in the matter without knowing beforehand the aims and intentions of that international meeting, hindered the realisation of illustrious Bolivar's idea. At the Congress of Panamá there convened, notwithstanding, the representatives of the United States, Sargeant and Poinsett, those of Colombia, Gual and Santa Maria; those of Guatemala, Larrazabal and Mayorga and those of Mexico, Michelena and Dominguez, who returned to their own country in August 1826 because the members of the assembly resolved to meet at Tacubaya (near the town of Mexico); but this new meeting never happened to take place.

So we may say that Mexico, fifteen years after consummating her independence, was maintaining official relations with almost all the cultured nations on earth, not excepting her former dominatrix with whom she concluded the treaty of peace and friendship of 1836. The relations with the United States began to cool through the question of Texas, a vast portion of territory belonging to Mexico, where the Spanish government under the viceroys' rule had permitted the settlement of colonists who at the sight of the stormy first days of our independence aspired at segregating from the new Confederacy. Being aided in their attempt by the United States they were enabled to fight advantageously with Mexico and to proclaim a little later their incorporation into the powerful Republic of the North. It is not incumbent on us in this part of the book to write however so brief a relation of the contention arisen with that motive between the two Republics and which ended by the treaty of peace signed at Guadalupe-Hidalgo on February 2nd 1848; but we cannot forbear to state that if in the sphere of arms fortune as it always happens, favoured the stronger, in the sphere of right and on the field of diplomacy reason, justice and rectitude always accompanied the weaker of the two contenders.

The official relations between Mexico and the European powers, up to the failure of the French intervention in our country, always had a peculiar character whereon it is necessary to insist as a tribute



Mexico. — National Palace. Ambassadors' hall

paid to truth and justice. They were distinguished by a persistent spirit of arrogance on the side of those monarchies, often carried to extreme terms by the diplomatic agents who were not up to their important mission and by a system of more or less veiled hostility against the liberal institutions and the governments of the Republic derived from each of the beneficial evolutions effectuated in the country and which those governments had the mission to develop in all their political consequences and in their transcendent social range of influence. The unjust war made to the Republic by France under the monarchy of Louis Philippe in 1848 is quite characteristic for the arrogant spirit of the strong contemptuously trampling the most elementary principles of the law of nations and a sufficient proof of the system of hostility we just mentioned is afforded by the acknowledgment and moral support bestowed by all the monarchic European governments on the conservative faction that for three years (1858-1860) was dominant in the capital and a part of the country fighting an obstinate and bloody strife with the legitimate liberal government of the Republic represented at Veracruz by president Juarez; but that faction, headed by Zuloaga and afterwards by Miramon had officially asked monarchic Europe to intervene in the affairs of Mexico, through their agents Almonte, Hidalgo, Murphy and Gutierrez Estrada and this explains the acknowledgment and support bestowed on the conservatives and the meaning of the *friendly intervention* offered several times during the Reform war by the ministers of England, France and Spain resident in Mexico.

The triumph of the Reform and the installation of the constitutional government in the town of Mexico on the first days of 1861 quickened the endeavours of the conservative party at the European courts. Indeed, a vast plan had been elaborated under the ardour of those intrigues and Mexico was the starting point chosen for the development of that conspiracy aiming to establish in America European influences, both in the political and in the economical and mercantile spheres, it being noteworthy that the initial moment of the action begun by Napoleon III precisely coincided with the commencement of the formidable civil war that broke out in the United States of America. Loathful is the history of the Republic's foreign relations in 1861, because it renders manifest the amount of iniquity with which they pretended to abuse of the weakness of the Mexican people pressing it by exactions of impossible fulfilment in order to found thereon some pretexts conducive to the development of premeditated plans.

The coalition agreed on at London by England, Spain and France having become disjoined, this latter Power assumed the responsibility and the action of implanting a monarchy in Mexico and the prince chosen by the imperial French government to be the founder of the dynasty was officially recognised by all the Powers and they maintained diplomatic relations with him till the moment of his streperous downfall. The United States' government alone, far from joining the monarchic nations in the acknowledgment of Maximilian's empire, continued maintaining official relations with president Juarez who was the lawful representative of the Republic and the centre of union of the Mexican patriots in their strenuous struggle against the foreign invader and his allies.

After five years of rude combats the Mexican people thoroughly restored Republic in the middle of 1867 beholding for the second time consummate the independence of the native country. Victory had been won fighting without truce, with nobody's help and without shrinking in face of the formidable enemies' power; and the national Government might well state in its turn that for its own part it had performed the first of its duties in not contracting any compromise, either abroad or at home, that might harm somehow Mexico's independence and sovereignty, the integrity of her territory or the respect due to the constitution and the laws. And eminent Juarez tributing in the name of thankful fatherland the highest acknowledgment on the good Mexicans who had defended her, said to his countrymen: «...Let the people and the government respect the right of all. Between individuals as between nations, the respect for other people's right is peace...»

These noble words condensed a lofty political teaching; indeed it befitted very well the most entire and foremost man among the defenders of democracy in Mexico to affirm with his authoritative word

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National army

War trophies existing
in the Artillery-Workshops Museum at Mexico



and at the very moment of triumph, the eminently moral, just and humane principle that had been forgotten or disavowed by the powerful, with detriment of the peace and the dearest interests of our country. Respect for the right of others was invoked by the Republic when it was threatened with death; her voice not having been listened to she drew the sword to die or to save her independence and her liberties; these being recovered by her single exertions, her first magistrate repeated the same principle once more, now consecrated by victory. It was no menace nor a warning, but the quiet expression of an heroically affirmed right.

Among the beneficial results of the struggle sustained by Mexico against the French intervention and its ally the conservative party, against the political scheme that intervention pretended to impose and against the European influence always favorable to that order of things, we must at once point out the radical change of our country's relations with the foreign powers. Instead of the insults and exactions of a haughty and troublesome diplomacy there was to obtain the respect claimable by the sovereign nations that know how, and are able, to maintain their dignity and their rights; and the erroneous conception that had been formed abroad about the convulsions agitating our country so long a time, must vanish before the truth of the facts, for it could be known that those commotions signified the efforts of a nation striving to overcome the obstacles opposed to its development on the ever fecund and beneficial path of liberty and progress just by the members of a faction formerly favoured by the support of official Europe.



Matthias Romero
First ambassador of Mexico to the United States of North-America

The bases of Mexico's new international policy were settled by the high public powers in the course of the memorable year 1867. In the speech with which president Juarez opened the sessions of the Federal Congress on December 8th that important matter was considered thus: "...Through the intervention our relations with the European Powers were cut off. Three of them, Spain, England and France, in virtue of the London convention, set themselves in a state of war with the Republic. Afterwards France alone continued the enterprise of the intervention; but then the so called government sustained by her, was acknowledged by the other European governments that had kept up relations with the Republic and now disavowing her parted from the condition of neutrality. By doing so, those governments broke their treaties with the Republic and they kept and still keep cut off their relations with us. The national government's conduct was necessarily adjusted to the norm set by those governments. Without pretending anything from them we have taken care not to do anything that might justly be considered a motive for offence; and we shall not oppose any difficulty to conclude

»ding, under opportune circumstances, new treaties with just and convenient conditions, especially regarding
»matters related with the interests of commerce.»

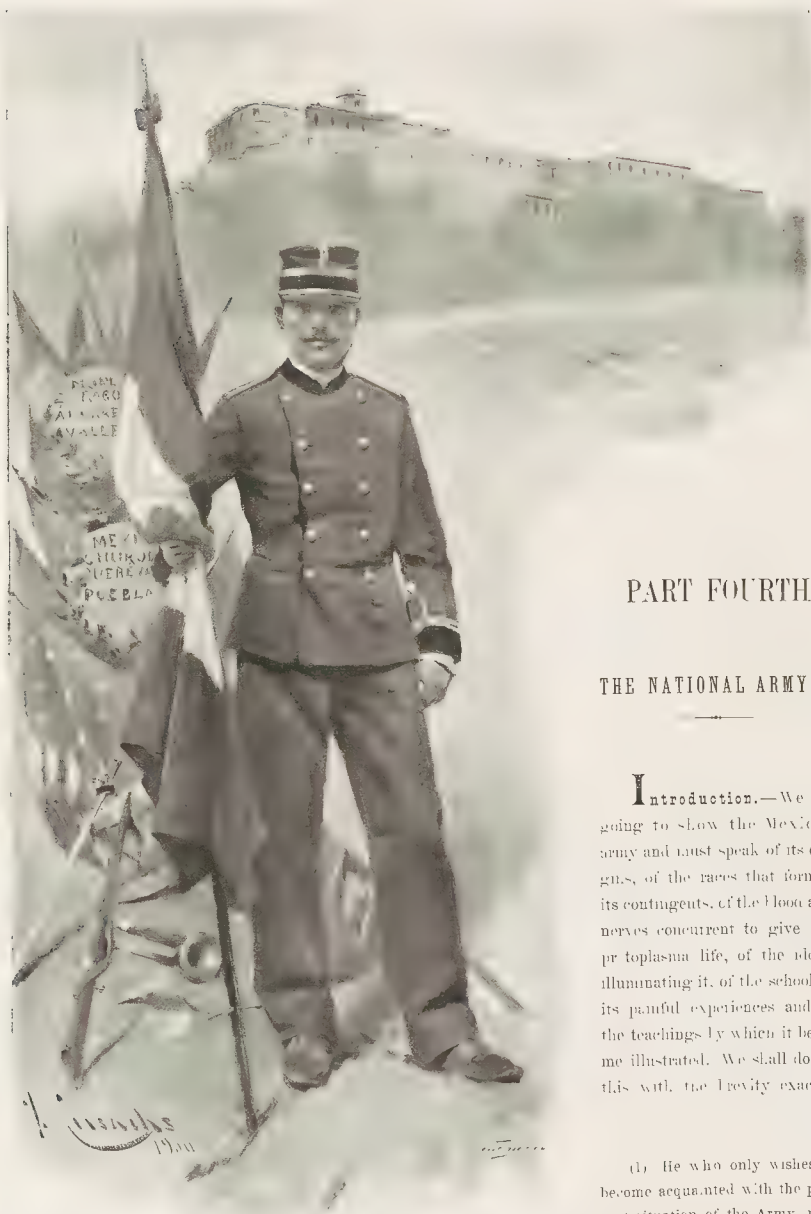
And the Congress of the Union, in their address to the Mexican people issued on January 8th, 1868, spoke as follows: «As for the European powers which, acknowledging the so called Empire, broke off
»their friendly relations with the Republic, Congress bears them neither hatred nor resentment; the ports
»are kept open for the commerce, industry and emigration of the whole world; and no opposition will be
»made to renewing diplomatic relations with the nations wishing to establish them, provided it be on the bases
»of strict justice, mutual interest and due reciprocity. Meanwhile it is honourable for our people so atro-
»ciously calumniated to make the world behold that in Mexico the foreigners to enjoy all sorts of guar-
»antees need no more protection than that of the Mexican laws and authorities.»

When the high public powers of Mexico made the above declarations, the Republic was maintaining diplomatic relations only with the United States and of cordial sympathy with the Spanish-American nations that had not recognised the government set up by the French invaders. Successively and without our government's parting from the bases it had set down with enthusiastic applause of public opinion, it received the representatives of the following powers, thus inaugurating in each case the renewal of official relations: North Germany, a political organism preceding the instauration of the German Empire (May 4th, 1869), Italy (December 17th, 1869), Spain (June 30th, 1871), Guatemala (July 1st, 1872), Portugal (October 28th, 1879), Belgium (November 20th, 1879), France (November 29th, 1880) and England (January 5th, 1885). All the treaties and conventions concluded before between Mexico and several of these Powers were considered nonexistent and the new international pacts that after the Republic's triumph over the intervention and Empire have been concluded with our country by several of those nations and by others that for the first time and at a recent date have established official relations, are based on strict justice, mutual interest and due reciprocity.

At present Mexico maintains official and commercial relations, or of international friendship, with the following countries and their governments: Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Holland, England, Italy, Portugal, Rumania, Russia, Servia, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland, Argentine Confederation, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa-Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, United States of America, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela, Japan and the Hawaii islands.

During a third part of the century, from 1867 to our days, the Mexican republic has lived in uninterrupted peace with the other peoples of the earth and the slight difficulties that sometimes have arisen in her foreign relations have been promptly removed without the smallest detriment to her honour and legitimate interests. For the maintenance of this harmonious and beneficial concert linking Mexico with the other sovereign and independent nations there have been concurrent: the patriotism and cleverness of our high mandataries, the faithful and honest fulfilment of the obligations laid on us by the international treaties, the frank hospitality the Mexican people offers and grants everybody without distinction of nationality and the spirit of justice and respect for right which in due reciprocity animates the foreign governments and peoples in their relations with our Republic.

Julius Zárate.



PART FOURTH

THE NATIONAL ARMY (1)

Introduction.—We are going to show the Mexican army and must speak of its origins, of the races that formed its contingents, of the blood and nerves concurrent to give the protoplasmic life, of the ideals illuminating it, of the school of its painful experiences and of the teachings by which it became illustrated. We shall do all this with the brevity exacted

(1) He who only wishes to become acquainted with the present situation of the Army, may read the paragraph titled: *Summing up. The present Army.*

by the limited space we dispose of in this book and it must be noted the life of the army is the life of Mexico; the survey of this institution is a national survey, since our country has been an essentially military one, up to a few lustra ago when after conquering peace it entered upon a new era.

Opening our eyes heedful of History we behold the venerable shades of the past rising melancholic, solemn, and speaking to us about the times that are no more; we hear them telling us what molecules integrated the being that enlivens us to-day; what rays of light the thought that lights our spirits; what blood, soaking our fields, marked the way we are going; what sacrifices were consummated by our forefathers; what agonies they suffered and to what heroic deeds they rose and so bequeathed us a fatherland full of glory.

Before the conquest of Mexico and its consummation.—In the remoteness of time the wild warrior, the tribe, is to be seen on our emerald soil and under our sapphire sky; he shelters himself under the shade of the trees, climbs on the lofty mountain and fights furiously for his prey.

The Aztecs coming from the North-west of the American territory, after centuries of peregrination, obeying their augurs' vaticination, settled, in 1312, among enemy tribes, in the valley they denominated Mexico, after their warrior god *Meshitli* or *Huitziliposhthli*; and arming the bow and couching the pike they shout their terrific battle-cry.

Active and desolating campaigns succeed one another and the tufts of flames of the burnt villages mark the passage of the Aztec phalanx which received the name of Meshica from the territory it occupied. More than a century passed by and the Aztecs had formed a powerful empire calling it *Anahuac*.

The town of Mexico founded on a lake and at the side of the grand forest of Chapultepec with the most pure canopy of its transparent sky became the metropolis whither the tributary princes and kings crowded from all sides.

Conquest widened Anahuac and at the beginning of the XVI century it extended from the kingdom of Michoacan to the frontiers of Guatemala and from the Gulf, in the Atlantic ocean, to the coasts of the Pacific in the South, having in its interior some flaws, such as the independent kingdom of Tlaxcala which had been conserved in virtue of an impolitic pact imposed by the Meshica themselves to their own detriment. The subsistence of Tlaxcala had been consented by the lords of Anahuac in order to wage with the Tlaxcaltecs the periodical sacred war with the aim to get the captives who from time to time ought to be sacrificed on the altars of the god of the combats worshipped by the Aztecs. Thus, by dint of that pact they respected the frontiers of the Tlaxcaltec kingdom and so they taught their warriors how to fight.

The chief honours, the franchises, among that warlike people, were for their brave soldiers who formed a caste superior to that of the priests. For them the glories in the fights and the commodities and distinctions in peace. For the rest, war was the social state of the Aztecs or Meshicas; because by not permanently occupying the conquered countries, imposing merely tributes on the vanquished, they left them in conditions for rebelling and such rebellions succeeded one another.

During their childhood the boys of the family were prepared for the fatigues of fighting and after attaining a certain age, being adolescents, they were handed over to the State, in order to do their military apprenticeship and began to render certain auxiliary aids in campaign.

We shall now speak of the organisation of the troops that, in peace times, were drilled by parades and shamfights. The graduation of rank was rigorously maintained; three subaltern degrees ascended over the rank and file being obtained according to the number of prisoners made by the private. Above these subalterns there rose the caste warriors; their first degree was that of *otomilt* cavalier, chief of a *calpulli* or squadron composed of 200 to 400 warriors whose squads or troops were commanded by two subalterns each of them. The said cavalier wore a high plume that served his soldiers as a banner; above him there ascended successively the tiger or lion and the eagle cavaliers. The former commanded groups of four or six squadrons resembling our present brigades; the latter headed three or four of such groups,

these bodies being analogous to our divisions. The distinctive marks of such high chiefs was their dress consisting of the dissected head of the animal whose name they wore and of mantles made with the skins or feathers of the same; those heads serving as helmets and those short mantles as armours. They decked themselves besides with leggings, neck-laces and bracelets.

Among those cavaliers the members of the King's Council were chosen who decided about international questions soliciting the approval of the monarch who presided over them as supreme chief of the troops. These aulic councillors received the name of sun cavaliers.

The squadrons of veterans formed the heavy infantry armed with lance, mace and *chimalli* (shield); the young soldiers formed the light infantry bearing bow and arrow, dart or sling; they were not allowed to use chimallis, but the young apprentice auxiliaries helped them with their shields to defend themselves. Wood, obsidian and copper were the materials for the construction of the offensive weapons and raw leather for the shields. The weapons were more or less adorned according to the warrior's rank and the lance was an arm of distinction. Some poniards, those of the princes, were even made of gold. For defence they generally used the coat with cotton lining and skins of wild beasts outside, and helmets or morions more or less decked with coloured feathers.

The king assisted by three eagle cavaliers commanded the great divisions composing the total host and the forces of his allies.

There were storehouses for the arms manufactured by the Meshica and those gathered from the tributaries; there were divers functionaries for military administration and much care was taken for all things relating to victualing.

In default of beasts of burden to carry victuals they made use of the men that were not enabled to serve in the army and had them orderly led. As for the soldiers when undertaking an expedition they generally carried provisions for two days; afterwards they were supplied through the Commissarial stores or from the magazines of the places through which the forces passed.

Besides the bravery the Meshica are said to have possessed they were animated by fanaticism. They believed they performed the nicest duty dying in war for their god and when taking the field they prayed and offered themselves for sacrifice. At the end of the war the greater part of the forces withdrew from active service, there remaining only some detachments for the security of certain posts and of the equipment depots.

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Meshica warrior

The Meshica practised the system of fortifying their places and especially a spot dominant over them, in the fashion of a citadel, giving it a pyramid shape, with grades all around. They executed divers works of permanent fortification, either surrounding the spot with dikes and walls or availing themselves of those means and of forts like the above described in order to secure a camp or a mountain lying in a strategical situation.

As for the marching of the troops they did it in regular order, keeping vanguard and flankguards and behind what we now call impedimenta there went a force to cover the rearguard. For halting places after the day's march they chose elevated spots to settle their camp on and did the security service of same. Whenever it was deemed necessary the military camps were fenced in with stockades, stones and some ditch.

On the march to war they made use of spying and reconnoitring on the enemy. To begin combat the most general tactics were to advance a sort of guerrillas of slingers at the front, in groups of five or six, more or less distanced from one another according to the solidity they wanted to give this first line; at the rear of the same and in disposition to advance mingling among the slingers or to take the flanks other similar groups of bowmen marched and after them in parallel columns there came the great divisions of which the army was made up. At the end the reserve troops were placed, squadrons of select soldiers with others of young ones. Thus the forces listening to signals given with the shells or the *teponashtli* (drum), executed certain movements either at the van, or at the flanks or the rear. In the pitched battle they knew how to take the enemy in the flank or the back without getting disorganised and they made use of ambush when they thought it propitious and with that aim they would have recourse to feigned retreats. They practised surprises making quick expeditions in the depth of night.

When the question was to attack fortified spots they established sieges to prepare the assault or at once pushed on if there was any chance of success. The passage of unswadable rivers was effected on rafts and they even made provisional bridges with cords, reedwork and logs. They destroyed the walls of towns with common instruments to make breaches and they scaled the heights with the means they improvised according to the necessities they foresaw.

Military justice made itself felt with severity always respecting rank in as much as only the superior could judge the inferior.

In spite of all those means of discipline, organisation and tactics and above all the legendary bravery of the Meshica they did not succeed in forming a great nation; it was because they did not mix their race with the subdued, they did not procure a community of interests between the vanquished and the vanquishers; on the contrary, crushing the peoples they domineered with exorbitant tributes they deepened still more the chasm and created germs of hatred that sooner or later, at the first propitious moments, produced their bitter fruits.

Be this as it may, Anahuac, on a smaller scale, was a kingdom resembling the Roman empire, warlike, haughty, domineering. And the origin, although remotely, of our army lay in those Meshica hosts which, joined by their allies, attained, when the xv century was drawing near its end, an effective force of 24,000 armed men that formed an expeditionary body.

A magnificent spectacle it would have been to see, at the first golden rays of the sun, on an emerald hillock, those picturesque hosts, their parallel columns advancing in array. At the head there went the great eagle chiefs dressed in gold decked clothes and showy plumage; the tiger and lion captains with their fantastic helmets and their shining furs; each squadron with its chiefs at its front; the faces of the soldiers painted in red; the arms glittering with obsidian and gold; on the shields the dazzling mirrors of pyrite and above, like a flaming wave, the tufts of coloured feathers; behind the charges and at the last term the rearguard of select warriors. A fantastic, picturesque parade, where life and light are playing in a shadeful picture, having for a canopy a splendid sky.

Another element was to mix with the aboriginal to produce a new race. America had been discovered by Columbus in 1492; afterwards military expeditions had come to the islands of the Antilles archipelago, but only in 1519 they had some vague notice about that event in Mexico.

It had been foretold by the god of the Meshica himself, according to the sayings of the priests, that men come from Orient would destroy the Meshica kingdom and all the surrounding ones; and fanaticism, deeper rooted every day, contributed to the effect that through the vaticination the peoples dropped into the most complete discouragement, in face of the unavoidable nearness of their ruin.

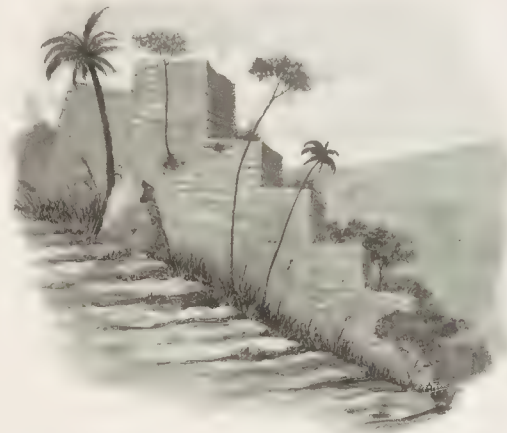
The first Spanish fleet, that of Ferdinand Cortés, coming from Cuba at the beginning of the year 1519, arrives at our picturesque coasts peopled by divers tribes vanquished by the Meshica, but never allied with the Meshica; their tributaries, indeed, but keeping their natural spite against the domineering Aztec. That first expedition was composed of eleven ships manned with buckler and sword armed soldiers, arbalisters, musketeers, horsemen and fourteen cannon, together 673 Spaniards, the footmen well equipped, the horsemen with armours and helmets of shining iron on flying horses, never before seen on American ground.

Cortés, partially vanquishing the ones and making auxiliaries of the others, valorously advances into the interior, never fearing that unknown land, that immensity of infinite horizons might devour his temerary legion of brave adventurers; and he becomes aware of the great nucleus of resistance in the Mexican empire then ruled by Motecuhzoma II, a fanatical king frightened by the fatal auguries.

The Tlascaltecs allying with the Spanish captain increase his force with 8,000 warriors; and so, between friendly and hostile he reaches Mexico and demands barracks from the emperor of Anahuac who grants them. A series of peripeties it would be long to relate succeeded one another; more Spaniards arrive on our coasts and although at first enemies they at last increase the rows of Cortés who, sly and bold, by means

of a sudden stroke, imprisoned Moteculzoma and later on the Aztec monarch stoops to favour his jailor's designs of dominion telling his subjects he continues willingly with his family and servants in the barracks of the invaders.

Cortés having been absent from the capital of Anahuac, his lieutenant, Sir Peter Alvarado, executed such acts as induced the Meshica to rebel in spite of the mediation of their royal prisoner whom they obeyed no more. While the Spaniards and their allies were besieged and incessantly attacked in the barracks they occupied, the absent captain Cortés arrived to succour them and the Indians let him enter freely. He is bringing more troops; he is seen on the causeways formed over that kind of island whereon the imperial town rises, marching at the head of 1,300 footmen, 96 horses, 80 arbalisters, 80 arquebusers, 8 cannon and about 4,000 Tlascaltecs. This column had hardly ended taking lodgings when it was besieged as in war, together with other adventitious people existing in the town beforehand. The attacks, defences, sallies begin and succeed, and so five days pass from the 24th to the 29th of June of the year 1520. The walls of the barracks that sheltered the invaders being partially destroyed, victuals being scarce, and the cannon and arquebuses having apparently ceased to intimidate those brave Aztecs who rushed on them undauntedly stepping over the bodies of them by whom they were preceded, Cortés attempted in vain to avail himself of Moteculzoma's authority in order to be allowed to leave the town.



Cenotaph

That king when he addressed his people from a high, was anathematised by the crowd throwing stones at him to cause his death and maledictions to accompany him into the eternity. The king being in such conditions and wounded by those stones, the Spanish captain, seeing he could no longer serve his aims, ordered to kill him. After this having lost all hope he prepared to effectuate a sally.

This happened on the 29th and his operation was disposed for the following night that favoured the intent of Cortés by darkness and rain.

Since the preceding night the conqueror had filled up some canals that cut his retreat obstructing the causeys by which he was to set out. Besides he armed a portable bridge to be carried by 300 Tlascaltecs and 30 Spaniards to pass over the canals they would find on their way and with the mud at their feet, the rain above and the shades around them the troops move to effectuate their departure. The column is beaten with rage, it is attacked at the front and at the flanks; its van and centre come out leaving rows of dead on their way; a part of the rear, fighting and falling into the ditches and canals filling them with their bodies, can hardly follow; and the extreme rearguard, totally cut off, must retreat to their barracks where they are vanquished and the prisoners are sacrificed all of them on the altars of god Huitzilopostli. In the several affrays and especially in the rout of that night the invaders and their allies must have lost 1,000 Spaniards, 4,000 Tlascaltecs and 80 horses, their treasures and their artillery, there being left about 600 Spaniards, 3,000 Indians and 24 horses.

At Popotla, at the foot of a gigantic ahuehuate still existing, Cortés dismounted to see if he could organise the blood stained remnants of his shattered army; and the tears ran from his eyes, in that night, whose attributive of *sad* has been kept up by history. At the end of six day marches, short in extent and large in hard toils and jeopardies, the routed Spaniards and their allies leave the Valley of Mexico never ceasing to fight on their way against Indian phalanxes that assailed them. Later on two hard combats ensued until, on July 8th, Cortés reached the friendly kingdom of Tlaxcala.

Expeditions, several fights, constant toils to organise the allies, arrival of more Spanish forces, succeeded one another; and the active and valorous Cortés, now fighting and always toiling, increased his elements more and more.

Prince Cuauhtemoc who occupied the throne after the death of the king that succeeded Motecuhzoma, young and valiant, rushed into the tremendous struggle foreknowing he must succumb with his empire, surrounded as he was by hostile peoples and the Spaniards at the head of them; however, his resolution was to be crushed under the ruins of Anahuac *without fear in his heart or shame in his face*: such was his manly speech before his council. Some of his friends pleaded for peace; among its partisans there were high lords and not stooping to consider their lofty position the prince, for an earnest warning, caused their heads to roll on the ground.

In April 1521, after several campaigns, Cortés was ready to attack the capital itself of the empire and was awaited there by Cuauhtemoc who had vainly tried to obtain an alliance with the great kingdom of Michoacan that answered his missives saying every one must procure his own defence. This want of agreement between the aboriginal peoples of this New World gives us an explanation of the relative facility of their conquest.

The Spanish captain needed to build brigantines in order to dominate the lakes surrounding Mexico, to dig canals, to discipline the numerous hosts of his allies and with more than 80,000 men of them and 600 Spaniards he undertakes the operations. Other numerous troops reinforced him afterwards.

More than a fortnight passed before Ferdinand Cortés had organised the sundry divisions he directed upon Mexico by distinct roads; and on the 20th of May those hosts occupied their posts around the town. either by land or by water where with their superb brigantines they dominated the frail canoes of the Aztecs. With 40,000 warriors Cuauhtemoc prepared for defence.

The temples, the palaces, fell down with crashing under the fire of the cannon and in virtue of the incendiaryism constantly practised by the besiegers.

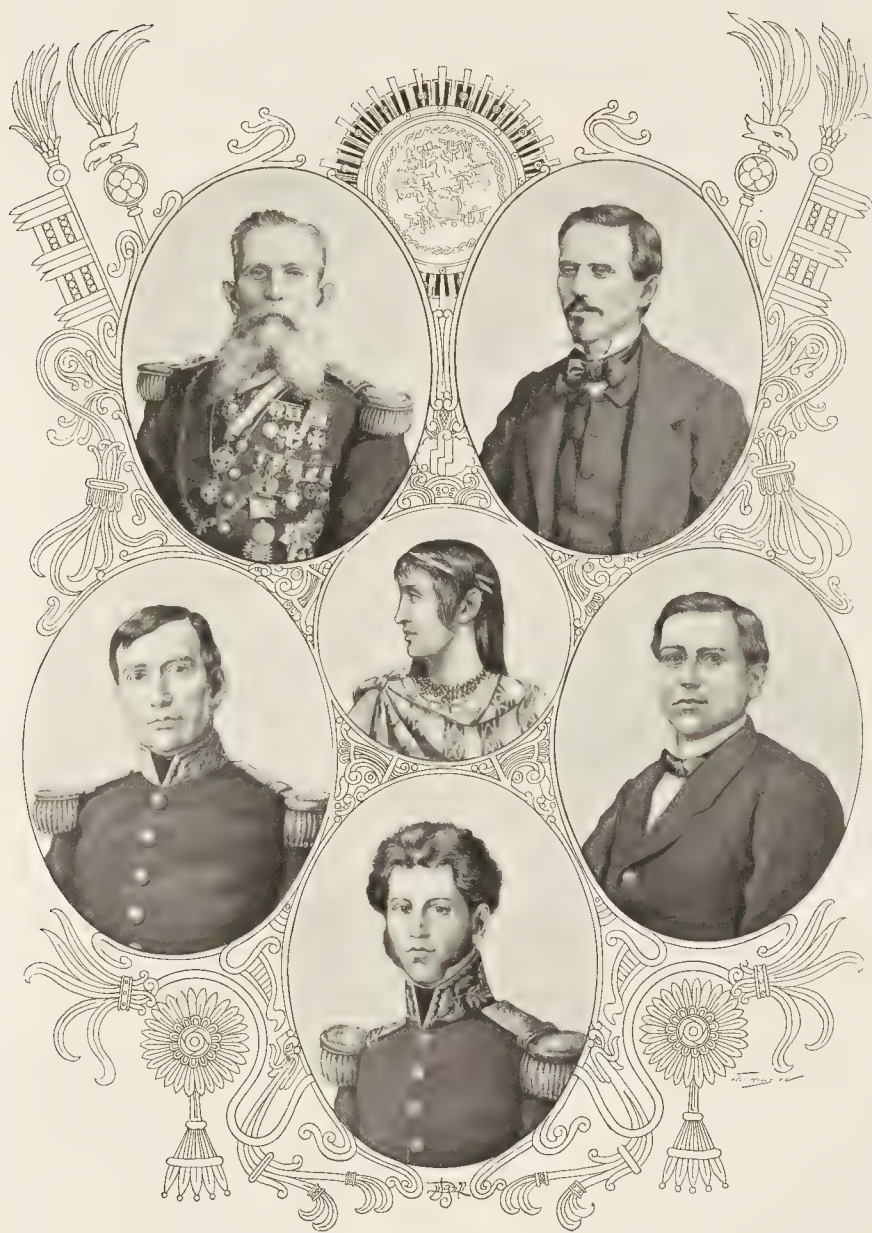
Combined attacks were effectuated on different parts by land and by water at the light of the flames

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National army

Escobedo. Degollado
Cuauhtemoc
Arista. Guerrero. Zaragoza

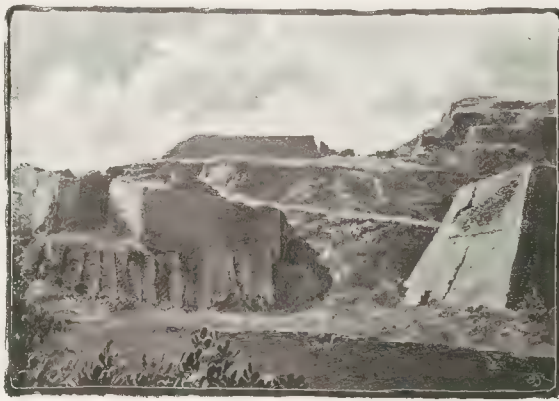
PLATE I



some times and other times by full day light or favoured by the shades of the rainy nights of the watery season during which the siege of the capital of the empire was taking place. Immense columns rushing on the causeys met with an unsurmountable dike in the war tried masses of the Meshica obliging them to fall back; but Cortés was receiving more and more auxiliaries and the besieged were daily suffering more and more losses impossible to fill up.

Three general assaults not being successful, Cortés destined 100,000 of his allies to systematically set fire to the town, in order to be able, by the aid of that terrible element, to advance upon the defenders of the place and to straighten them in; but these valiant men succeed once more in widening their radius of action routing the forces that attacked them on June 30th, anniversary of the *sad night*. But the days were not passing in vain for the besieged who felt hunger and suffered the pest produced by the tens of thousands of unburied corpses rotting on the banks of the lakes, in the ditches and in the mud of the streets. On the other hand, rain was falling incessantly and all was contributing to increase corruption and diseases.

By July 24th, fire had destroyed a large part of the town: the mass of smoking ruins was at the sight of the Meshica; behind the same there were the besiegers, on strategical spots, on the land and on the water; under their feet the Meshica had the dead bodies in so great numbers that they covered the pavement; in the atmosphere there was pest, hunger in the entrails and always valour in the heart. Tlaltelolco was the only refuge left for them; they had lost three fourths of their warriors and in such circumstances Cortés sent messages to Cuauhtemoc requesting him to surrender in exchange for graces he offered him; and the Emperor, worthy representative of an heroic race, irrefrably ordered the emissaries of the Spanish captain to be put to death, having been chosen for their lofty lineage among the prisoners taken from the enemy. As for the Spanish and native prisoners taken by the Meshica in the combats, all of them by hundreds and hundreds were sacrificed to the wargod, the ferocious *Huitziliposhiti*. Combat was kindled and amid its clashing the sinister roaring of Cuauhtemoc's shell was heard always and incessantly inciting his hosts to strife.



Stairlike walls of la Quemada

The 10th of August arrived and the Meshica continued their heroic incredible resistance; the 11th passed in useless missives to Cuauhtemoc whom Cortés solicited to meet and came the 12th too; therefore the Spanish captain despairing to overcome that tenacity, rushes upon the Meshica who, hungry and weak, bristled up and killing fell wounded or dead over so many bodies of the dead in the last combats, indeed, they were actually fighting on them, crushing their members under their feet.

The besieged remained in possession of the only ward now known under the name of Santa Anna. After seventy five days of struggle, on the 13th of August, general assault was renewed: Cortés still insists on intimating rendition, and the answer is they prefer death. Land was missing to fight upon and the Meshica made by water their attack upon the enemies that literally filled the streets and causeys.

Cuauhtemoc, with some of his men in canoes, left at last that bloody heap of ruins and rot; and overtaken by the bergantins he was made a captive and led to the presence of Cortés who full of admi-

ration could not refrain from embracing that hero from whose eyes a tear stole out and pointing to the dagger of his vanquisher he said: *Having done all I could in defence of my people and being now, a prisoner, unable to do anything more, draw that weapon and kill me.*

Such was the end of the Anahuac empire's greatness.

We have given account only of the first and the last combat between the Conqueror and the Aztecs; for it is not possible, in brief pages, to speak of the whole of that hazardous campaign occupying the time elapsed between the one and the other transcendental event.

The great Spanish captain ensures his conquest in the East and the South of Mexico and extends it to Michoacan.

Spanish governments are established in Mexico at first under the name of Audiencias and afterwards that of viceroys and conquest is carried on to the small kingdoms existing in the country and so an homogeneous whole is formed by the force of the arms, the Spaniards in all their enterprises counting always on powerful aboriginal auxiliaries.

Viceroyal epoch.—The conquest being, at last, consummate, the Indians are kept aloof from all that might excite their warlike instincts and they are maintained in servitude. Up to the middle of the xvii century, the service of arms is done by the Mestizos, sons of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers: brisk, agile, sobrius men, most excellent riders, for in equitation they surpassed by far the conquerors, their teachers.

Devoted to field labours, being obliged to cross mountains and desert valleys, riding on nervous horses of Andalusian origin, the Mestizos, intelligent and knowing their country, soon formed a special type.

In 1690 the viceroy, count Galve, sent a Mexican contingent to the Spanish Island invaded by the French under the command of so titled governor Cussi and they won there a victory owing to the furious charge made by 500 Mexican lancers. First remarkable exploit of the soldiers of a new race, the Mestizo race we have alluded to.

The Mexican troops, using the regimentals and weapons of the Spanish army and submitted to the system of its regulations, having Spanish officers, began their military life. However, with the character of permanent troops there existed in New Spain (Mexico) in 1761 only 2,796 men of the three arms. Those troops being devoted to sustain some forts on the frontier incessantly invaded by the savages who had withdrawn more and more towards the North, proved capable to restrain advantageously their common enemies who lacked fire arms; but their discipline and drilling was only a counterfeiting of that of the renowned hosts of the mother country who had carried the victorious standards of Charles V and Philip II through warlike Europe.

That nucleus of less than 3,000 men spread over 300 leagues appeared very deficient to the viceroy marquis of Cruillas, who endeavoured to organise the forces of New Spain; and hardly considering the matter, he asked for staffs of officers from the mother country and began to create new troops. Since 1762 he put under the arms the so called *militia*, soldiers who existed only by name and to do some local service, from time to time, without living together in barracks; aided by the commerce of the chief towns he raised bodies of voluntaries, on foot and on horse; and so, at the end of the mentioned year, there was formed the army denominated of New Spain, with a total number of 8,000 men and 30 pieces of ordnance.

This organisation was carried into effect under the reign of Charles III who in 1765, to improve the military institution, sent from Spain 2,000 privates, staffs of chiefs and officers, six marshals and one lieutenant-general. This was given instructions to double the effectives.

In the question of recruiting they thought of sortition as it was practised in Spain; but they stumbled over the great obstacle of the resistance offered by creoles and mestizos to take the office of the arms as their only profession and moreover, with the want of statistics as a basis for sortition; and their quick organisation being urgent for the Inspector of the troops, he resolved to make use of crimpage,

of consignment effectuated by the local authorities and finally of forcible levy. In this fashion, in every province there ought to be raised one or two regiments equipped by the same and armed on account of the Royal Treasury. Crimping was had recourse to in general to gather creoles and mestizos and the consignment of the authorities would also comprise these classes; but forcible levy, whenever it became necessary to employ it, was practised almost on the indigenous race alone.

The officiality, little disciplined and conscious of the power derived from the armed force, showed itself heedless of the civil authority and even of the common social interests.

In 1787 the Army completes its organisations and the subaltern officers of the new troops already recruited among the youth of the chief families of New Spain, the commission of captain being sold at \$ 6,500, that of lieutenant at \$ 3,000 and that of ensign at \$ 2,000.

Such were the conditions our military institutions found themselves in when the xviii century was drawing near its end.

This territory, unknown to the Old World three hundred years before, fractioned into hostile kingdoms and earldoms, was made homogeneous by the conquerors who thus laid the foundation of the new Mexican nationality in which the mestizo race made its appearance. The men of this new race formed the nerve of the Army.

The xviii century was ending. Those were conflagration times in which, for universal admiration, the Republic of the United States stepped forth giving a beautiful example by sundering from the dominion of England, and the French revolution by the sanction of the human rights. The word of the national independence was speaking in New Spain, in secret, with various language to the ears of all creoles, mestizos and indigenes, commoving every soul.

The forces of the Government of the Colony summed, in 1808, about 40,000 men of permanent troops, and militias being in assembly. Of the former a concentration had been made in the environs of Jalapa, 15,000 soldiers with 20 battalions, 24 squadrons and 34 pieces of ordnance.

Those military elements were going to enter upon a most bloody struggle.

War for independence.—In the same year 1808 we have mentioned, a conspiracy of several military and civilians is surprised at Valladolid; their purpose was to give Mexico her own government. In 1810 there follows another in Querétaro which spreads to several towns of the interior; it was headed by the parson of the village of Dolores and seconded by some creole officers, Allende, Abasolo and others.

That parson, Michael Hidalgo, in the early morning of September 16th, 1810, at the door of his church, raised the cry against Spanish domination, accompanied by fourteen men; and his voice that, sounding in the humble entrance hall of a village church, was to reverberate with thundering echos in the valleys and in the mountains throughout the Mexican territory, that was to inflame the souls of them who were called to form a nation, producing after eleven years of terrible struggles, the sovereignty and independence of the same; that voice carried off the present and very soon Hidalgo's troop reached the number 600. The first step had been made: Hidalgo knew he was the initiator of the great thought that would have for a result the formation of a free and sovereign nationality; but he also knew the initiators of such great things must become sacrificed on the rough road they take.

He was soon the chieftain of thousands of indigenes, without organisation and discipline, and without other arms than the tillage tools, stones or sticks. Few forces of the army joined those avalanches spreading over a large part of the country.

In the moment when the insurrection rises with its natural disorders and its terrific threats against the Spanish dominion, the partisans of the same become excited, and in the first place, the viceroy, with all his administration; the sons of the Iberian peninsula, elated by their role of lords and masters of the American territory; the big landowners who see their interests threatened by the revolution; the soldiers who heedless of their country only aimed at making a brilliant career, and specially the frenzied clergy for whom the very word *liberty* meant a heresy.

The billows of the opposite bands curl, shock one another and retrocede finding themselves stained with blood.

On one side power and good armament; on the other, the yesterday serfs, in undisciplined bands, with no more shields than their breasts and without other arms than those improvised in the moment of leaping into the ardent arena of the struggle.

The insurgents occupy large towns, combat against disciplined troops, offering themselves furious though without arms to slaughter; their tactics were at first to allow themselves to be killed in order that, after worrying and tiring the enemy by his ferocious task, the thousands and thousands that remained might win the victory. It was

the continuous mass that fell and fell and never ended; it was the crowd that jagged the sword dropping over them, that exhausted the park of gun and cannon fired at them and that at length choked the adversary by their weight; but that multitude was ever decreasing and succumbed.

A horrific, disgusting, bloody, struggle whose tremendous first stages were called «the Castle of Granaditas,» in the town of Guanajuato; «the Mount of the Crosses,» «Aculco» and «the Bridge of Calderon,» place where on January 17th, 1811 a mass of 93,000 insurgents were routed by 10,000 royalist soldiers.

Hidalgo had been vanquished by general Calleja. Troops like the routed, never fight retreating; they flee and disperse. So it happened; that immense agglomeration of men vanished like smoke and only some hundreds of regular soldiers follo-



Soldiers of the epoch of the Conquest

wed their principal chiefs in their retreat to the North. Treachery surprises them and Hidalgo and his lieutenants fall into the hands of the royalists and mount the scaffold to seal with their blood the holy cause of independence.

Licentiate Ignatius Rayon takes up the torn banner of the Mexican cause when it dropped from Hidalgo's hand and waves it with a firm and strong arm.

War takes another aspect: the unarmed and undisciplined masses of Indians congregate no more; the suffered mishaps make the chiefs of the insurrection wiser and they endeavour better to prepare their elements giving their forces a military organisation there being more mestizos among them than indigenes.

Flying columns, troops fortifying themselves in towns and mountains, numberless guerrillas in valleys and on hills sustain the campaign.

The Mexican guerrillas favoured by the roughness of the ground, sometimes cross on a sudden the plains, swift on their quick horses, and after consummating a surprise they return on the mountains. No band exceeded one hundred men and they fell suddenly upon troops on march or solitary detachments.

VOLUME FIRST

The national army

General Joseph Maria Morelos

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The audacity of the mestizo was displaying mainly with parson Morelos who performed true exploits in the South whilst Rayon established his head-quarters in Zitácuaro intrenching the town and neighbouring mountains where he was at last vanquished.

The metamorphosis undergone by the forces of the insurgents becomes apparent by a glorious episode: the siege of Cuautla sustained by illustrious Morelos who had under his orders the bold insurgents Hermenegild Galeana and his brother, the Bravos, parson Matamoros and others with 3,000 mestizos of the South elated by recent triumphs and some indigenes. Operations were begun by the famous general Calleja on February 17th, 1812; he succeeded in establishing his circumvallation works with 7,000 soldiers of the best royalist troops, and after executing a formidable assault with 5,000 men, he was obliged to retrocede by combats that were prolonged for eight hours. During that memorable siege there are recorded bold sallies of the beleaguered, tremendous fights to reconquer the water current of the river which the enemy pretended to snatch from them and for whose defence they established advanced redoubts and covered ways amid the thundering fire of bloody struggles; combined attacks of forces pretending to succour the place; strokes of true heroism by Galeana and the other chiefs, and especially by Morelos whose force, through the victims caused by hunger and pest developing in the town and the losses produced by the daily affrays during the seventy two days of siege, were reduced to only 1,200 soldiers among whom there was a great many convalescents unable to bear the weight of their guns. With those men weakened by the want of food and by fatigue the glorious chieftain resolves temerarily to break through the blockade, having answered with a sarcasm the offer of an amnesty made by the besieging chief in an express communication which Morelos returned him writing at the foot thereof the phrase: *I bestow an equal grace on Calleja and his men*. Amid the dreadful situation that surrounded him, when the terrific hurricane of death was roaring over his head, with all the yells of human misery, the hero had smiles of irony for his enemies.

The besieged make ready for the general departure: at two o'clock in the morning of the 2nd of May, 250 footmen, with the intrepid Galeana, lead the van; they are followed by 400 convalescents, wounded or diseased, with their arms at their shoulders; behind them there come those who cannot bear their guns and many of the inhabitants of Cuautla, Morelos with the remainder of the foot and 300 horse taking the rear to close the column. They turn to North-west marching through the bed of the river; they come to a ravine that completed the intrenchment of circumvallation; they make a bridge with the wood they carried with them for this purpose and when they began to pass over, a sentry of the enemy's camp makes the alarm discharge. Galeana kills him, but that discharge stirred the next troops, more and more of which come up as time is elapsing. Nevertheless, the insurgents reach the estate of Guadalupe and the surrounded defend themselves.

The first morning dawn illuminates the unequal fight; becoming aware that more reinforcements are coming, retreat is resolved after a general onset. Morelos' regular troops, under his direct command, retreat in good order; but the royalist cavalry executes a terrible slaughter among the disarmed sick and the inhabitants of Cuautla that accompanied the expedition.

Leonard Bravo, led astray with a group of men he had with him, was apprehended and delivered unto Calleja whilst the remnants of the besieged, with their glorious chief at their head, joined at Izucar Michael Bravo's troops.

The royalist chief quickly procures to leave matters in the form they ought to remain, in order to withdraw from that hot region where his soldiers were decimated by disease; and in presence of that solitary trophée of his victory, that deserted ruinous town destroyed by the cannon fire and bestrewn with corpses, he has some prisoners shot and orders the prey to be surrendered to the flames. At the fatidical resplendency of the fire, Calleja, with the operation army, begins, on the 7th of May, his march towards the capital where he arrived on the 16th of the same month.

The siege of Cuautla where none of the most important peripeties of a military event of this kind was missing would be enough by itself to render illustrious Morelos renowned.

Trujano sustains another siege similar to that of Cuautla and Rayon and Morelos, like others, continued the struggle, the latter winning brilliant triumphs. Having caught many enemies he wrote from Tehuacan to viceroy Venegas proposing him the exchange of 800 Spanish prisoners for Leonard Bravo; and the viceroy not only rejects the offer but on September 13th orders the aged patriot to be executed putting him to death by vile garrotte used only on robbers and murderers. In the face of that act the independent general, indignant, orders 400 Spaniards, prisoners at Zacatula, to be fusilladed and sending Nicholas Bravo the mournful news he directs him to sacrifice 300 Spaniards more he had in his power, as had been done with those at Zacatula.

The son receives the painful news of the infamous death inflicted on his father; he measures the act of his vengeance and after feeling and reflecting he resolves magnanimous, even at the risk of displeasing his chief, not only to pardon those 300 men he was expected to fusillade, but to let them free; and in order to extol the holy cause of independence he procures to proceed in the most solemn and public fashion. Thus, all his troops standing formed in the camp at Melellin and in front of them the 300 prisoners in file, he addressed them saying that as a reprisal for the death of his father he ought to have them shot by order of general Morelos, but that he, for the glory of the cause he defends, pardons them and grants them absolute liberty. Nearly all of those men overcome by the greatness of one of the most noble acts registered by history resolve to remain at his orders enlisting themselves under his banner.

In November, Morelos, in front of Oaxaca, with 5,000 men and 42 pieces of artillery, intimates rendition to the Spanish lieutenant-general who defended the place with 2,000 soldiers, 40 cannon and 5 forts; and not having been listened to he dictates a general order ending with these words: *To-morrow the troops will take their barracks in Oaxaca*, and they actually did so having possessed themselves of the town by assault.

Numberless actions took place over the whole extent of the country and it is not possible to give an account of them in the reduced space we can dispose of, although we deem them as important as the pitched battle at El Palmar by which parson Matamoros illustrated our annals, dying later on after the tremendous rout suffered in face of Valladolid by the only army the insurgents then possessed commanded by glorious Morelos.

Unlucky hours for the patriotic cause were coming; and although the fort of Cópore erected on a steep mountain repelled the Spanish divisions attacking it and Vincent Guerrero made a victorious campaign in the South, in many other combats the independents were vanquished; their great leader, who by his exploits immortalised Cuautla, was caught and put to death at the end of the year 1815.

On the other hand new and warried battalions were coming from Spain.

In 1816 and 1817 the island of Mescala heroically defended by indigenes, the famous fort of Cópore and that of Tehuacan capitulate and the Sombrero fort is taken by assault, precisely when Mina, the Spanish republican, who comes to New Spain in order to fight against the troops of Ferdinand VII who persecuted him, was doing a splendid campaign sweeping like a fire blast from the coast of Santander (Tamaulipas) towards the interior of the country where he too soon succumbs for the cause of the independence of Mexico.

Other forts and other forces were put down afterwards and at last, in 1819, Guerrero alone, glorious, sustained himself bravely on the Southern mountains worrying the royalist hosts led by Armijo.

This general resigning, is replaced, in November 1820, by Sir Augustin Iturbide who had the reputation of being active, intelligent and brave. This royalist officer was the son of a Spaniard and a creole lady, born at Morelia, and he was to intervene in a great event in the Mexican people's life.

The ten years' struggle sustained for the cause of national independence, that cause which for its triumph had needed the death of so many heroes and the sacrifice of so many martyrs, which had left an immense number of families in a dreadful situation; that cause in whose defence a new generation had sprung up, had a strong foundation in the consciences of all the Mexicans and the public spirit, by

a war so unequally sustained against the Spanish government, was prepared to obtain its solemn sanction in the historic moment we are now coming to.

It had not been in vain, then, that Hidalgo shouted the independence cry at Dolores, on the 16th of September 1810; not in vain the famous lieutenants who followed him fought until they died on the battle fields or on the scaffolds; not in vain did the second pleyad of heroes headed by illustrious Morelos, fight valorously, offering their lives for their Country on the altar of freedom; not in vain had noble and generous Miua, by his fulminant campaign, contributed to sustain the war; not in vain did indomitable Guerrero persist in the Southern mountains; not in vain had thousands of Mexicans died in their struggle against the royalist troops; the holy cause prepared by that epopee of heroisms and martyrdoms was going to triumph, it was alive in the consciences and it was beloved by the spirits of all who deserved the name of Mexicans.

By what intricate ways the aim pursued through so many battles was to be attained!

Iturbide had the intention to form a dynasty, to erect a throne for himself, and therefore he achieved the independence of Mexico having been before a persistent enemy of the insurgents. With plenty of elements he thought he could dominate Guerrero and afterwards the viceroys; but he had not taken into account the bravery of the Southern leader and modified his projects when his troops were beaten by their foes. So having prepared all things he wrote a friendly missive to illustrious Guerrero in the first days of the year

1821, letting him know he would join him if he approved a certain plan which he proposed and on February 24th he issues a manifesto at Iguala wherein he explains the idea he had made Guerrero acquainted with about national independence: acknowledgment of the catholic, apostolic, roman religion as the only true one; nomination of a governing committee that might convoke for elections of deputies who were to settle the Constitution of the Mexican Government, and the formation of the army of the three guarantees, «Religion, Independence, Union,» destined to support the scheme that has been denominated *Plan of Iguala*.

That plan which above all things implied the idea of the independence of Mexico was received throughout the territory as the light of a new dawn by the generality of the inhabitants of the country. Union was mentioned therein and this opened the doors into the new order of things to the Spaniards residing here; religion was spoken of and this gave the clergy hopes of respect for their fueros and privileges disowned by the latest reformed Constitution of Spain. Thus, then, the three guarantees of which an army was to be the support gratified the most powerful national elements of that epoch.



Soldiers of the epoch of Independence

If any doubts might be roused by the record of the former royalist Iturbide's behaviour during the ten years struggle that had stained the country with blood, the name of Guerrero united with that chief scared the doubts away and caused the old independents to proclaim fully the famous Plan of Iguala.

The viceroy gathers his war elements against the triguarant army, but they fall asunder, a great majority join that army and some isolate combats, in the province of Veracruz, are the weak signs of resistance ending in that province by the presence of the old insurgent Guadalupe Victoria who is aided by Santa Anna.

Valladolid, Querétaro, Zacatecas and Puebla capitulate and nearly all the other provinces adhere to the liberating plan; the town of Durango resists and is taken by assault. In the first decade of September the triguarant army stood in front of the capital of New Spain after effecting an actual triumphal march and only the ports of Veracruz and Acapulco and Perote castle remained in the power of the royalists.

In that army of 16,000 men in which illustrious Guerrero held an important command the fusion of royalists and independents had taken place forming a whole to which for the first time the name of *Mexican army* could be applied.

After several days of besiegement Mexico entered upon arrangements with Iturbide and on September 27th 1821 that liberator army held its triumphal entrance into the town that had been the capital of New Spain and which hereafter was to be that of independent Mexico.

Independence was achieved, indeed. Owing to the exertions of so many known heroes and so many others without a name, the conception of Hidalgo for which he sacrificed himself became a reality; the efforts of great Morelos and of them who accompanied him in the second stage of the struggle were fructifying; the constancy of Guerrero, the indomitable, got its reward; Iturbide's brilliant evolution was crowned by success. Three centuries of domination had ended and the Mexican army appeared radiant our capital, making solemnly, under the acclamations of the people, at the sound of military music and marches, at the report of artillery salvos, their glorious martial defile with 9,000 footmen, 7,000 horses and 68 pieces of artillery. Among those soldiers one might distinguish the valiant sons of the South who with Guerrero always kept up in their mountains the sacred fire of patriotism.

Empire and Federal Republic.—In 1821 Mexico had finished the work of her emancipation, but how heterogeneous were the components forming the nationality! How deeply this fact was to make itself felt in the march of a people that not counting on a dominant or authoritative element capable to steer it in a determined course, was going to feel the shock of divers portions that, with nearly equal forces, clashing with one another in their pretention to prevail, must occasion so fearful an anarchy as sometimes to make people lose all hopes for the nation's salvation.

In fact, three large aggregates constituted the Mexican people in the moments it got its independence: the Spaniards elated by the old regime; the creoles and mestizos proud of their emancipation and inexpert in the management of public affairs and the indigenes humbled by servitude.

There existed the rudiment of a republican party begot by the warmth of the ideas manifested in the Congresses held by the insurgents at Chilpancingo and Apatzingan and the monarchic party composed of those who had but just served the cause of the Spanish monarchy. Lastly there were obtruding the interests of the military and ecclesiastic classes, privileged by fueros, and moreover the special interests of the clergy that century after century by accumulation had heaped up and detained immense riches.

But let us pursue the events.

Iturbide, counteracting the Congress he convoked, after divers machinations, proclaims himself emperor of Mexico and soon there are to be seen in the arena the political parties making opposition animated at first by the spirit of democracy and envenomed afterwards by the most dreadful passions.

By and by Iturbide looks with disdain on the former insurgents and these show an ireful anger against him who, craving for the grandeurs of a throne, had contributed most powerfully, looking for his own benefit, in realising the independence of a people.

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National army

Puebla. — Monument to Independence

VOL. I - PART SIXTH



Iturbide, wishing to introduce economies into the army budget, suppressed the militia and the surplus major staffs and in order to regulate all, he ordered the infantry to remain subject to the Spanish regulations of 1815, with the difference that the regiments instead of having three battalions should be composed only of two. As for the cavalry according to an opinion issued by the War Secretary the regiments ought to consist of four squadrons having each of them two companies. The provincial free companies that had done so good service since the epoch of Calleja, were abolished. The bodies of engineers and artillery were to continue in the same state restraining all expenses relative to foundry and ship-building. Regarding the irregular troops to garrison the unhealthy coasts and the frontiers no remove was made and even the *Opata* and *Pima* Indians of Sonora were allowed to continue their service. The medical service was not organised, but the indications to constitute the body of army surgeons were set down. The Spanish ordinances and regulations continued to be valid in the Mexican army with very slight modifications.

Generalissimo Iturbide wishing to satisfy certain aspirations created the Order of Knights of Our Lady of Guadalupe that was to count 50 great-crosses, 150 knights and a number of supernumerary members he should deem fit. From the legislative body he solicited advancements for them who formed the triguarant army since the beginning and for all who had come over from the royalist army, bestowing honorary degrees on those who had brought with them a certain number of

royalist soldiers to enlarge his files, thus rewarding the defection of those men from their colours and greatly harming morality and discipline by such graduations. Regarding Guerrero's troops he made a spiteful distinction not deeming worthy to be considered of equal condition those troops that demonstrated their aptitude routing his own as soon as they made their appearance in the South, four consecutive times.

At last the violent proclamation of Iturbide was sanctioned by the Nation; but the emperor did not contrive to regulate the course of public affairs and dissolves the Congress. In view of this act Guerrero, Bravo and Santa Anna rise in arms, claiming respect for the people's representatives. Rebel troops dominate the imperial ones and succeed in occupying the city of Mexico, and on March 30th 1823, Iturbide, exiled, leaves the capital which not many days before had seen his coronation. On the other hand the sundry chiefs that had rebelled did not pursue the same plan and were accordant only in the aim to pull the emperor from his throne.

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Artillerymen of the epoch of Santa Anna

After the departure of Iturbide there was not left in Mexico a superior chief prevailing over the others in those moments when the military mutinies were at the order of the day, when there was no party organised and well defined, when bankruptcy was absolute in the administration and when the provinces, without a centre of union, found themselves in general disconcert.

This state of anarchy was the sinister picture in which the departure of the banished emperor stood out detached.

After Iturbide's exile a majority of the Congress that had got reinstated, named a provisional government; but the conspiracies succeed one another: Santa Anna pronounces and the provinces, in a state of complete disorder, do not obey that government.

In order to satisfy the aspirations manifested by armed movements a new constituent Congress is convoked which shapes the organic bases of the representative federal Republic among the clash of civil war that with the noises of the arms quells the voices of the parliament orators.

Those bases were published on November 22nd, 1823.

The anarchic struggles were increased by reactionary conspiracies in favour of Iturbide; this returns to Mexico without the permission of Government and caught in the province of Santander he is court-martialled and shot at Padilla on June 19th, 1824. Such was the end of that man, valiant as a soldier, benevolent towards his friends, inflexible against his adversaries and unjust for the insurgents. Be this as it may, it is incontrovertible that Iturbide was a superior man and the most efficacious instrument for the realisation of the national independence. His death deprived the Mexican monarchists of the hope for a reaction in behalf of their projects, because it was hardly possible to nourish the idea that a prince of the house of Bourbon would come to put on his head a crown that not even a victorious general had been able to keep on.

Another class of movements could be carried into effect, nevertheless, and the conspiracies did not cease altogether.

Meanwhile Congress, conscientiously performing its mission, redacted the political pact which was concluded on October 4th 1824, and by the same the sovereignty and independence of the States forming the Republic was acknowledged and the civil and political personal rights proclaimed, but that pact implied a compromise with the old privileges of the clergy and the army which must needs produce its bitter fruits.

The Spanish garrison, still remaining in 1825 at San Juan de Ulua, a strong castle advancing into the waters of the sea that surrounds Veracruz, after a prolonged and heroic resistance, capitulates on September 15th and is embarked for Cuba with its arms and colours at the expenses of the Mexican government.

General Guadalupe Victoria had been elected president of the Republic and Nicholas Bravo vice-president.

The Republic was unable to consolidate by and by; but it is accepted throughout the whole country and, in spite of some isolated perturbations, begins its organisation work.

The army being dislodged and discipline deeply harmed by the civil war wherein it took a part effecting several partial seditions, it was difficult to maintain peace.

In the year 1827 there happened to be a serious rising asking for the expulsion of the Spaniards which at length is decreed with various salvoes. General Bravo, on the other hand, at the head of some troops, demands the dissolution of some secret masonic societies suspected of fostering extremely liberal ideas not to be reconciled with those of a party styling itself conservative.

General Guerrero, by order of the President, opens the campaign and dominates the field.

In view of the state of immorality of the troops existing in the Republic, so readily leading themselves to obey the voice of rioters whatever pretext might be invoked to rise in arms against the lawful authorities, government tried to create new military elements; and before the year 1827 came to its end the so called *civic militia* was instituted it being enjoined upon every Mexican that he was obliged to concur to the defence of the Nation and to form that militia which normally remained in assembly sub-

ject to the governments of the respective States and under certain conditions to the president of the Republic.

It was a pity that this institution also denominated *National guard* was ill regulated since its very beginning and so it never produced the result that was expected from it.

In the budget of the year 1828 there figured a military school, 12 battalions of permanent infantry, 12 of cavalry of the same class, 34 companies of cavalry for the States of the North and the West, 11 companies of infantry or cavalry to cover places on the coast, 2 companies of invalids, 4 battalions of active militia and 4 more of coast guards, to which 3 squadrons were added, this force being understood to depend on the Federacy, making up a total number of 16,000 men.

The Mexican navy had just been organised and was specified in the list of expenses with one ship of the line, 2 frigates, 1 corvette, 4 brigantins and 6 schooners.

The electoral epoch came. Two candidates appeared with chances to obtain the triumph in the suffrages; they were the illustrious general Vincent Guerrero and general Emmanuel Gomez Pedraza who at that time had charge of the ministry of War.

The latter coming out triumphant, Guerrero's party would not put up therewith. Santa Anna pronounced in his behalf and is followed by others and others; several bodies rebel in the capital itself and there are combats taking place in the streets and buildings. Thus it happens that the elected president does not take possession of the charge he is called to by suffrage, resigns office and leaves the country.

In such circumstances the constitutional period of president Victoria was going to end and he intrusts the war office to general Guerrero himself who endeavours with his dispositions to staunch the blood that was being shed.

He made his political enemies some concessions and exerted himself to get general Anastasius Bustamante designated as vice-president and he succeeded therein. Under such auspices he entered into office.

Anarchy.—After a revolt like that which led Guerrero to the presidency, every sergeant who turned his fusil against his colours, every officer who broke his duty, every chief who sullied his reputation and that of the army he formed a part of, deemed himself deserving of great rewards and neither the national coffres nor the vacancies at the government's disposal could satisfy the exorbitant ambitions of so many people. Very soon there were swarms of discontent humming.

General Guerrero had scarcely been in office when a Spanish expedition coming from Cuba under the command of Barradas, landed at Tampico pretending to invade the country with 4,000 men; and general Santa Anna discomfits it on September 9th 1829, in the very neighbourhood of Tampico, after seven hours of hard fighting.

The foolish isolated invasion of those troops seems to have been planned with the sole aim to prove a failure.

The Mexican Government expected another Spanish navy to appear near Veracruz intending to land troops and therefore sent a strong division under the orders of vice-president Bustamante to be in cantonment at Jalapa awaiting the events to come. This general, at the head of such a force, presently disowns supreme Government and rushes against the same while some troops of the garrison at Mexico make ready to follow the movement.

Guerrero, with an escort, repairs to the South where he counts on his former companion, the brave insurgent John Alvarez.

Vice-president Bustamante wields the power in the Republic and exercises a system of terror in order to prevail. The States are restrained in their sovereignty. Guerrero and Alvarez, from the South, turn their arms against him and blood stains the fields of the States of Puebla, Guerrero and Michoacan. Bustamante's government pays at the price of gold Vincent Guerrero's head and not awed by heroism has it cut off on the scaffold. Later on, John Alvarez, sword in hand, imposes government his conditions on which he submits.

The illustrious dead had held the Presidency, because Gomez Pedraza, obliged to leave the country, had resigned and Guerrero scored the largest number of votes after the former; Bustamante was at the head of the Executive power with the character of vice-president.

War had but just ended by the submission of Alvarez, when Santa Anna, at Veracruz, relying on the garrison of that port, begins, on January 2nd 1832, a revolution seconded by some local governments

and several garrisons, defection having become the watch-word of the army. The pronounced claimed that Gomez Pedraza, called in from abroad, should be placed at the head of government.

The President defends himself sword in hand and on September 18th 1832, he fights a famous action called of El Galinero (The Hen yard) after the name of the spot where it took place. With 2,500 soldiers he routed 6,000 of his adversaries; but other forces of his were overcome by Santa Anna with whom he at length enters upon an agreement yielding the post of President of the Republic to general Gomez Pedraza who enters into the capital at the head of the troops before in war.

On the said general Gomez Pedraza, in virtue of the agreement, it was incumbent only to call the people to elections and the votes designated for President of the Republic general Antony Lopez de Santa Anna and for vice-president Valentine



Cadets of the Military College killed in the defence of Chapultepec

Gomez Farias. This latter, license having been granted the former, exercised power and began to procure important reforms that alarmed the privileged classes: the clergy and the army.

Santa Anna, not having any political conviction, seeing the drift of public affairs, declares himself at last favourable of those classes now forming definitively the conservative party under the standard of religious intolerance and fueros, in opposition to the other band that called itself liberal and longed for reform.

Centralism.—Anarchy.—War with the United States.—In 1834 Santa Anna assumes the supreme magistracy of the Nation amidst mutinies set up against Gomez Farias whose reform laws he nullifies. Immediately seeing that troops of Zacatecas and elsewhere rose to defend the sovereignty of the States intruded upon by his dispositions, he marches against them and overcomes them.

VOLUME FIRST

National army

Modern military establishments

**Panoramic view of the National powder-mill
at Santa Fe**



The constitution of 1824 was deemed too liberal by the triumphant party, and Congress accordant with Santa Anna, dictated some reactionary organic bases on October 23rd 1836.

Meanwhile the inhabitants of Texas, most of them Anglo-Saxons, disown the Mexican government and declare themselves independent. Santa Anna, leaving a substitute to govern for him, assumes the command of the army, gathers resources to satisfy the necessities of the campaign and crossing deserts he invades the rebel territory and vanquishes at the Fuerte del Álamo, in the neighbourhood of San Antonio de Béjar, whilst general Urrea having executed a parallel march with his column, obtained five consecutive triumphs over the Texans.

The general-president penetrates into the interior, crosses the whole territory, arrives at the frontier of the United States, and advancing with a column of 1,500 men, is surprised on April 21st 1836, by the enemy on the bank of river San Jacinto owing to his complete abandon and the disdain he feels for his contraries. After the surprise and defeat of his force he was made a prisoner; and in such conditions, with his character of president of the Republic he commits the indignity of treating with the enemy; he acknowledges the independence of Texas and orders the countermarch of all his, as far victorious, troops. Several subaltern chiefs, among them general Urrea, were unwilling to obey the prisoner's orders; but the second chief, Filisola, retreats swiftly with the greater part of the division and thus obliges all to second the operation. The river Bravo (Grande) was repassed on June 15th by 6,000 men who took up cantonments in the small towns on the right bank of the river.

As for the United States, eager to possess the territory of Texas, they were soon seen to grant the Texan revolutionary governing Committee loans of money under several prettexts and to dissimulate the organisation of volunteers on their territory and to arrange maritime expeditions in their bays against Texan ports.

In Guadalajara, Oaxaca, Chiapas and San Luis Potosí rebellions succeed one another.

In January 1837 they swore a Constitution redacted in conformity to the reactionary bases sanctioned before.

The Presidency being acephalous an election is proceeded to by asking the Legislatures for their votes and suffrage favours Anastasius Bustamante with a majority.

Santa Anna's figure having vanished from the political horizon, who else might better serve the interests of centralism?

The prisoner of San Jacinto came back; but according to the decree of February 22nd, he was not allowed to exercise any command and ought to give accounts of his acts since the moment of his being taken a prisoner.

The hostilities of the Texans make themselves felt by sea and our forces never moved on that far away territory. In the interior of the country those forces were able to operate because they had a way to live in the villages situated near one another; but when the question was to cross the deserts to go to fight the Texans and the Californian rebels already disowning the Government's authority, it was indispensable to count on abundant resources for the columns destined to expeditions in districts where everything had to be carried.

In the years 1837 and 1838 struggles for federalism and against centralism, threats of invasion on the Gulf coasts from the part of Texan ships or American ones feigning to come from Texas, and others more serious ones from a French squadron maintained the country in war and continuous alarm.

Besides Texas, California and New Mexico pretended sundering from the country and were fighting therefor.

Santa Anna had been assigned a command of small importance on account of the bombardments the alluded French squadron might effectuate on the port of Veracruz and the mariners of that squadron perform by surprise a bold disembarkment which Santa Anna repels by means of an offensive turn executed at the last moment and in which he happened to be wounded. That act of valour was sufficient to make the prisoner of San Jacinto's past grave blunders forgiven and forgotten.

Bustamante asked for and obtained permission to put himself at the head of the army in order to quell the war in the interior and to have the government's forces free and ready to attend to the difficulties coming from abroad. Then pardoned general Santa Anna was named Interim-president.

Bustamante having triumphed over the revolutionists occupied once more his high post in government on July 17th 1839; however war was again kindled. It would be rather prolix relating the various combats in which Mexican troops encountered one another, when the Nation was dismembering into shreds that were called Texas, New Mexico and California: in the capital itself, at the end of July, general Urrea effected a mutiny, and columns are seen assaulting the positions of the loyal forces, the artillery shattering the defended buildings, war, in one word, with its clashes, destructions and slaughters, mastering the town during eleven days. Finally the rebels submit, their chief having escaped previously.

In the first days of August 1841, the general commander of Jalisco, Antony Paredes y Arrillaga, rebels; Santa Anna contrives to find a motive to pronounce also; and on the 31st of the same month general Valencia, with half the garrison of Mexico, disavows Government possessing himself of the citadel and the neighbouring buildings. President Bustamante puts himself at the head of the loyal forces and covers the principal perimeter of the town. The days are passing amid skirmishes, the rebel chiefs unite in Mexico with more and more forces and after some hostile manoeuvres of powerful belligerent columns, in the avenues of the capital, Bustamante resigns and in the neighbouring town of Guadalupe convenes, on October 6th, in being substituted by Santa Anna.

Paredes who craved the post of President and other ambitious chiefs occupying farther spots, were made to put up with anything.

On the 16th of that month of October general Armijo triumphed over the Texans who had invaded the distant territory of New Mexico taking prisoner their chief general Lead.

Santa Anna, in his new presidential period showed a decided endeavour to do his best to sustain the army seeing it was the most efficacious element to impose his will. As for the system of recruiting to maintain the bodies in full strength, he did not limit himself to have the people consigned for them that were without occupation as had been practised for the case since the viceregal epoch, but labourers and artisans were snatched by force from their work and the fusil put in their hands. Among all this people levy was considered a public calamity. On the other hand the maintenance of those troops must be attended to and as the most appropriate means to assure their pay Santa Anna made the whole administration subservient to the satisfaction of that necessity and in order to attain this purpose most surely, the offices of the Treasury in every Department were submitted to the military commands for the distribution of funds.

These measures, dated October 18th, showed clearly that Santa Anna's plan of government was a most plain one: «The army for himself and the Nation for the army.» All other things were deemed of a secondary order.

On January 17th 1842 Santa Anna decreed that in the towns of the Republic, according to their census and importance, companies of cavalry should be raised and held at the disposition of the Department government; on the manors the same thing should be arranged, the forces being styled *rural* ones. The former were to be maintained by the towns and villages when in active service and the latter by the landowners. In the case of war, the decree had it, the President may dispose of such military elements.

Yucatan had withdrawn from obedience to Government, this provoking several combats. Meanwhile general Woll made a triumphant single expedition on Texan territory, but saw himself obliged to retrocede.

On June 10th a new constituent Congress met convoked after the revolutionary plan to reform institutions. Working with the aim to carry through the federal system, it was dissolved by Santa Anna who convoked another that got installed on January 6th 1843 for the purpose to redact the bases of government best suiting the interests of the President in office and they were proclaimed on June 12th. In conformity with the rules therein set down, elections for deputies were held; they met on January 1st 1844

and on the following day Congress, having made the computation of the Departments, proclaimed as Constitutional President general Santa Anna who before had exercised power only provisorily.

In the month of March, the President of the United States, Tyler, negotiates with the so called Government of Texas the annexation of that Territory to the Republic of North America and on April 22nd account is given to the senate of that country about the Texan people's conformity with the annexation.

In June, Santa Anna dictated some providences to the purport, he explained, of reconquering the Texan district; he asked Congress for funds and the Departments for their contingent of blood to the amount of thirty thousand men.

In November, the minister of the United States declares in the name of his government, that if the expedition that was preparing against Texas, were carried through, the fact would be considered a declaration of war to his country and the corresponding measures would be taken. The menace was not heeded and the military preparations were continued, some forces advancing in direction towards the North.

Meanwhile several peripeties of the civil war were taking place. General Paredes, once more military commander of Jalisco, makes a new pronunciamiento; being seconded in the interior he marches with his forces to the East. Santa Anna rushes to encounter him with 7,000 foot, 1,500 horse and 20 pieces of artillery leaving in charge of government general Canalizo and ordering him to dissolve the last Congress that was holding sessions. It was impossible for Santa Anna to govern after rules precisely settled by any Constitution; and so it was observed that whenever he convoked a Congress, he was not long in setting it an end.

This once, the dissolution of the Chambers produces a gross popular uproar; they reinstate themselves in the convent of St. Francis, under the protection of a battalion of the national guard, and disown Santa Anna and Canalizo proclaiming President of the Republic general Sir Joseph Joachim Herrera who with a copy of the respective decree dated December 6th applied to the said Canalizo bidding him to cease acting as provisory President.

On receiving this errand Canalizo ordered the troops near the Palace to form in the courts of the same and he was ready to march personally with a column upon the convent of St. Francis where the Chambers were meeting as we have stated, when he was told the forces that had just gathered manifested they would obey only the constitutional authorities and forthwith an order of arrest issued by the heads of the same was communicated him, hearing which he became so indignant as to request general Salas who was with him, to set fire to the park existing in the stores, in order to make the Palace



Guerrilla of the Reform epoch

blow up with his own person and all who had joined there; Salas ran with a match in his hand and was just arriving at the stores when he was stopped and seized and the lighted match snatched from him. What a pity that such energies were wasted in mutinies and civil revolts.

The deputies and senators presided over by general Herrera, followed by the people and a large column of troops, amid acclamations move towards the National Palace and occupy the same.

Several lamentable spectacles could not be prevented and so general Santa Anna's statue was seen ludicrously pulled down from its pedestal and dragged through the streets.

General Santa Anna had pushed onward from the town of Querétaro with the aim to encounter Paredes who by his turn left Jalisco; but on becoming acquainted with the events happened at Mexico, he retrocedes and repasses through the said town on the 20th; while he moves towards the capital, Bravo arrived there on the 22nd with the division under his command and was directly named general in chief of the army, Valencia being appointed his second. When president Santa Anna comes near Mexico, he does not venture to attack the place, but moves on to Puebla where the garrison prepares for defence and on January 3rd is unsuccessfully attacked by him. The assailants then besiege the town and their chief, being aware that Paredes arrives at Mexico and together with Bravo marches against his forces, enters upon negotiations with the said generals, resigns the presidency and abandoning his soldiers in front of Puebla, takes to flight with an escort of 500 horsemen on the 10th. Afterwards he dismisses his escort and when approaching Jalapa he is apprehended by a force of volunteers and shut up in Perote castle.

The question with the United States continued and the American general Taylor with cavalry troops on land and infantry on sea, had advanced in Texan territory and some ships of the navy of that nation presented themselves in front of Veracruz. The month of September had not ended when the North American Government announced its envoy Slidell, receiving the answer that he would not be received with the character of plenipotentiary unless the naval forces were withdrawn from our waters.

General Paredes who had effected two different pronunciamientos without obtaining by the same as much elevation as he craved, held the command of the reserve army at San Luis Potosí; and pretexting want of resources to send the troops that ought to reinforce general Arista who was already opening the campaign against the Texans, had gathered a big nucleus of forces under his orders, and intriguing with no other aim in sight but the satisfaction of his ambitions, contravening all his duties as a military and a Mexican, he raises the shout of rebellion. This Paredes who had already formed a school to make revolutions, with due anticipation had invited general Arista to establish some, according to him, salutary reforms in the Republic; and that general who with scarcely 5,200 men had to cover a line of 140 leagues, from Matamoros to Rio Grande, answered him he should not think of reforms in those supreme moments when the enemy was about to invade the Mexican soil and he had better send him the reinforcement division he had been ordered to send, because otherwise the troops under his command would be uselessly sacrificed: words of patriotism and honour which that professional revolutionary was unable to understand.

The military class pleased with anything that might give her supremacy, not caring for other interests, seconded in Mexico the San Luis plot and president Herrera was deposed in virtue of that movement.

On January 2nd 1846 the rebel from San Luis entered the capital of the Republic at the head of magnificent divisions to take charge of the supreme command of the nation.

General Taylor camped with his forces at three leagues from Matamoros on March 24th and new war ships increased the squadron that kept stationed in front of Veracruz. General Arista passes the river Bravo and orders Ampudia to attack fort Brown, whilst he, with the gross of his division, moves to the right, towards Palo Alto where Taylor defeats him on May 8th, beating him once more on the following day, at Resaca de Guerrero. After these two routs they determine to give up the place of Matamoros and it is given up, the garrison shattered by the defeats and by fatigue arriving at Linares on May 28th. Out of 5,200 men there remained 2,600.

With the numerous troops with which Paredes made his revolution to elevate himself, the destinies of war would have changed; a different course they would have steered if such forces had placed, as they had been directed, one half of their effective on the banks of the Bravo and the remainder at the rear.

Whilst on the North the invading army triumphed over the ill directed and worse equipped Mexican troops, in Jalisco and Veracruz pronunciamientos had been made against the San Luis plot; in Sonora there were grave local difficulties and at Mazatlan there happened a mutiny effectuated precisely by a brigade destined to embark for Upper California invaded by American troops.

Moreover ships of the United States began to blockade the ports of the Gulf.

A Congress having been formed, they declared, on June 12th, general Paredes was president of the Republic and general Bravo vice-president. The latter was intrusted with government, because the President was going to march towards the North with forces of which 3,200 men had already set out, when, in the morning of August 4th, general Salas at the head of the troops barracked in the Cittadel, one brigade of which was going to start with President Paredes, proclaims *Santa Anna and Federacy*.

The general we are speaking of gave Nicholas Bravo notice of his plan intimating him he should cease exercising an authority the Nation had not conferred upon him; after this there came the threats of advancing columns; then they enter upon arrangements agreeing about the essentials, on the 5th, that the troops present in the Palace with Bravo, should acknowledge Salas as general in chief, that they adopted the plan of *Santa Anna and Federacy*, with the restoration of the Constitution of 1824 and that general Salas should exercise power until the arrival of Santa Anna who had been called in.

This man who shammed every political colour without having any fixed principle was now going to avail himself of Federacy, the very Constitution of which he never could be a partisan. As for general Paredes he left Mexico with a few friends in the same night of the 5th and was banished later on.

Restoration of Federacy.—Anarchy.—War with the United States.—On September 14th Santa Anna arrived at Mexico and by and by manifested unto Salas his desire to hasten to the frontier and put himself at the head of the troops who were going to fight for their country.

Events were hurrying on at that frontier. Arista had been deprived of his command and substituted by general Ampudia; and this having received reinforcements had concentrated at Monterrey where Taylor comes into view at the middle of August. From the 19th to the 21st the enemy reconnoitres the place and then partial assaults are performed in which the besiegers counting an effective force of 6,500 men, lost 200 between dead and wounded; later on, in the night of the 24th the garrison capitulates, it being agreed that the Mexican forces, with their arms and standards, carrying away with them a battery of cannon, should withdraw into the interior of the country while the American troops ought not to advance during the space of six weeks.

On September 28th, Santa Anna left Mexico with a strong division in direction towards San Luis Potosi where he soon gathered 10,000 men. The advantage gained by the capitulation of Monterrey according to which the enemy was not to move on for six weeks, was not turned to profit; and Santa Anna ordering the troops coming from Monterrey to retire as far as San Luis and to be joined there by the Tampico garrison composed of 4,000 soldiers and 25 cannon, the Americans got full liberty to invade the States of Coahuila, New Leon and Tamaulipas.

In accordance with the Constitution of 1824 president Salas convoked the representatives of the people and in the elected Congress there were men of the parties that maintained the country in a state of war: the conservatives defending the fueros and privileges; the liberals claiming reforms and the moderates neutralising both.

On December 23rd, the computation of votes having been made they declared constitutional president general Santa Anna and vice-president Valentine Gomez Farias who immediately took charge of the Government, the former being absent. He directly brought before the Assembly a grave question to be resolved: no less a thing than the alienation or hypothecation of the estates of the religious communities

that represented an immense wealth, immovable because it could not enter into the mass of alienable possessions.

It was utterly urgent to obtain resources and the liberals found best and most obvious disposing of those estates; but they had better never attempted it; for the seditious protests of the ecclesiastic chapters at first, and civil war kindled in the capital itself, at last, were the consequence of the law issued by the initiative of the Executive Power and authorising for the moment the alienation of estates of the communities to the value of fifteen million dollars.

Santa Anna, stationed at San Luis, inclined to one side or the other, according to what seemed to him more convenient at the moment and that vacillation, of him who could do all he liked, pulled the liberals down.

That general at the end of the month of January of 1847, left San Luis Potosí for the North, with 10,500 infantry, 4,000 horse and 17 pieces of artillery. On February 21st, after most painful marches, because there are no victualling villages to provide for the necessities of the troops since they advance beyond Matehuala, the army made halt at the foot of Puerto del Camero (Sheep-strait) where the last battalions arrived after midnight, the troops having moved on at six o'clock in the morning of the 22nd, as if they were to enter into action upon the enemy who was supposed to stand at Agua Nueva (New Water).

Miñón was directed to advance by a flank with 1,200 horse in order to cut off the communication with the road to Saltillo, before the said manor of Agua Nueva; and the gross of the troops undertook the march finding Taylor in possession of the Pass of la Angostura, a vantage ground difficult to be flanked and with a retreat towards Saltillo.

General Santa Anna, in front of the American general, endeavoured to force the passage pushing his columns against the spot most strongly defended by the enemy; he prepared, however, ordering in the afternoon a hill to be occupied at the right of his front where two regiments of the enemy's were forced to retrocede. During the night, having taken that position, the gross of the force camped on the road and at six o'clock in the morning of the 23rd the commenced fight was continued.

A force was ordered to advance by the left, but becoming aware of the roughness of the territory where they were marching they were ordered not to rush on to assault. The battalions occupying the hill we have mentioned directed their fires against the enemy's position from that height; and as they apparently were doing great harm, the Americans attempted to dislodge them; so an eager combat took place by which the Mexican troops aided by those of the centre and a cavalry column not only made their contraries retrocede, but they attained their rear at Buena-Vista manor where the enemy's ambulance was posted, this being partially attacked by a small force of infantry and afterwards by cavalry.

The enemy made some efforts to cut off those troops that passed beyond his position by the flank, but on the front a large column advances under the command of general Santa Anna, and the attention of the defenders of La Angostura being so divided, their attempt failed. It was not possible for that column to force the passage of the road and it deviated to the right obliging the Americans to effectuate a concentration and to leave all that flank in possession of our troops. In the episodes of those combats of the right flank our infantry victoriously charged twice with the bayonet. Before that, our soldiers had possessed themselves of a cannon and afterwards they seized two more and three standards.

After a torrential rain, the shades of the night drawing near, came to make an end of that action that had cost the Mexican army about 500 dead and twice the number of wounded it being impossible to calculate the number of dispersed from the troops of recruits taken at an ultimate hour by levy at San Luis. As for the Americans from whom, on the day before the action, the cavalry of the van had caught a few officers and a squadron, general Taylor says they suffered the loss of 227 dead and 456 wounded, their best colonels, Harvin and Mc Kee, belonging to the former.

In the struggle of the 23rd the Mexican army had won on the whole right flank, the enemy being restrained to keep a defensive attitude. Notwithstanding, general Santa Anna ordered during the night

to effectuate the retreat upon Agua Nueva manor. The body of the army received that order with discontent.

It had been experienced on the afternoon of the 23rd, that the Mexican troops, not needing to pass by La Angostura, could take on the right flank the road to Saltillo near which colonel Miñon had kept his post with his 1,200 horse holding the town in alarm.

The fact is that after a stay of three days at the said manor of Agua Nueva where the Mexican army was not attacked by Taylor's division that had not been left fit to oppose our troops, the road to San Luis Potosí is definitively taken.

For want of ambulances and victuals many of our wounded and sick were left by the sides of the high road offering a heart-rending spectacle.



Veracruz — Former view of the port
(From a photograph by Briquet)

On March 12th that enduring army made its entrance into San Luis Potosí. There they learned that general Urrea with a cavalry brigade detached from the Mexican division stationed at Tula had approached Monterrey and seized a convoy of the enemy's laying hold on one hundred transport cars and causing a loss of 200 men between dead and wounded.

We left the relation of things happening at Mexico, in order to speak of the military events passing on the North. Now we must state that the metropolitan ecclesiastical chapter procured and attained that several bodies of the national guard called to service in order to be sent to Veracruz where some American forces were about to attack, rebelled against the government of Gomez Farias who pretended to dispose of a part of the clergy's estates, in order to save the jeopardous position of the country.

The loyal troops began to fight the rebel ones and both occupying more or less strong positions and neither assaulting the other decidedly, the struggle, having begun since the second half of January, was prolonging.

Santa Anna whom circumstances so often favoured was in conditions to perform the part of a Saviour; he arrived at Mexico on March 21st and by his order hostilities ceased in the interior of the town.

It was impossible for Gomez Farias to remain in office after the events we have mentioned and Santa Anna being obliged to leave for the East where the enemy presented himself, he was substituted by general Anaya. Meanwhile, Veracruz had been taken. Notwithstanding, Santa Anna marched to encounter the Americans who in the same time as at Veracruz and Saltillo, had expeditions operating in Chihuahua, New Mexico and Upper California. At Veracruz they had landed 13,000 men, but that place valiantly defended itself with 4,000 men during the interval of nineteen days. On March 28th the capitulation was agreed and there was no more firing at the town; on the 29th the flag, receiving the honours of our troops and artillery salves, was lowered on the forts of Veracruz and San Juan de Ulua.

After the seizure of Veracruz Tuxpan was taken and there were some partial combats of Mexican forces against flying columns of the invaders.

At that time Santa Anna had gathered his troops at Jalapa and was taking positions at Cerro Gordo with the aim to stop the triumphant American army that was advancing towards the interior. The Mexican chief counted 9,000 men and 43 cannon; the enemy's forces he was going to shock with, had a similar effective.

On April 11th the struggle began and combats succeeded without interruptions until the 18th when the Mexican forces were routed.

General Scott, in his official communication, stated he only lost between wounded and dead, 431 men; he said he could not calculate the relative losses of the Mexicans on whom he made 3,000 prisoners, seizing 43 guns.

You may suppose the terrific effect caused at Mexico by so complete a rout. Santa Anna excused the disaster by the bad organisation of his army, not taking into account that he had led more recruits to Angostura than to Cerro Gordo and that although he did not triumph there as a general, those recruits did triumph over their adversaries.

There were no securities left to fight appropriately with the enemy. Government and Congress contemplated in all its nakedness the ineptitude of that general of momentaneous fits by which he always fascinated impressionable people; and amid the general want of faith and hope, nobody, nevertheless, dared speak of negotiations for peace.

Santa Anna saved about 2,600 men with whom he passed through Puebla and arrived at Mexico taking presently charge of the Presidency.

It was resolved to defend the town of Mexico and they took to fortify the same establishing some advanced spots outside and one sole fortified line covering the perimeter of the town.

General Valencia with 4,000 men and 22 guns, and general Alvarez who from the South had come to defend the capital with 3,000 horse, remained in the neighbourhood of Mexico to operate in combination with the garrison that counted 12,500 men.

The foe presented himself united with 12,000 men and 30 pieces of artillery; on August 11th he stationed at the end of lake Chalco, avoiding the advanced fortifications, and undertook a long circuit sustaining some skirmishes with guerrillas of our cavalry; on the 19th he was at Tlalpam; he had performed a perilous flank march without being beaten.

This change of position having been effectuated Mexico found herself menaced by her weakest part.

General Valencia, with his division disobeyed the orders of the place and on the 19th posted himself at Padierna with the aim to beat alone the Americans who did not let him wait. The fight lasted all the afternoon of that day and at the end Santa Anna made his appearance with 5,000 men, without entering into action; on the following day, the Americans having gathered more troops, the struggle was renewed, without any news coming from Santa Anna who had retroceded to pass the night in barracks; and as immensely superior forces were agglomerating upon Valencia he was entirely routed being scarcely able to escape with two squadrons that with couched lances opened themselves a passage through the enemy.

The insubordinations of general Valencia were the cause of the Padierna disaster; but the behaviour of this chief provoking an utterly unequal struggle is not exculpatory for Santa Anna who might have protected him quite opportunely when the enemy had not yet gathered his forces.

The bridge and convent of Churubusco were flanked when the Americans starting from Padierna took the road of the capital without meeting any obstacle; for Santa Anna, who still stood in the environs, retreated, his rear forces having been obliged to engage with the enemy who not losing time rushed upon the Portales estate and thence upon the bridge of Churubusco taking it. Then the convent remained isolated with only 1,200 defenders and 6 cannon who held out two hours against numerous forces of the enemy awaiting reinforcements that never came. Having exhausted their park they stopped firing and received with the bayonet the 6,000 men who came rushing on over the breaches opened by the artillery. At the sight of such an attitude the assailants raised the flag of truce to allow the place to surrender without attempting an unsustainable assault. They occupied the position finding 136 dead and 99 wounded; the remainder without a sole cartridge, were taken prisoners. Such was the end of the 20th of August of 1847.

The gross of the American forces beat ours in detail; they always met with the valour of our soldiers and subaltern officers; always with the ineptitude of the upper ones.

In two days of combat the Americans, according to their statements, had lost between dead and wounded, 1,056 men. The Mexicans left 3,000 prisoners in their power and suffered a loss similar to theirs between dead and wounded, and moreover 1,200 who disbanded. This reduction of about 5,200 men amounted to more than one fourth of the disposable forces.

At the petition of the besiegers an armistice was agreed upon and formalised on the 24th; it ended on the 7th of September. During those days of truce proposals of peace were spoken of and the negotiations thereon remained pending. Trist, the envoy of the Washington government for such affairs, never despaired.

The enemy's head-quarters being at Tacubaya, Santa Anna established a powerful battle line between Molino del Rey and Casa Mata leaning his left on the former spot and his right on the latter, while at the rear, the Chapultepec wood where the reserve was posted, served as a support. As for general Álvarez, he received the order to move from Morales manor upon the enemy's flank or rear at the moment he would be most engaged.

Everyone applauded the plan to offer battle in face of the invading army with a competent number of troops; but after that manœuvre Santa Anna retreated in the afternoon with the bigger number of his forces leaving on the three aforesaid spots only scanty detachments whose total number did not reach 4,000 men. The general in chief was said to apprehend an attack upon the road by which he directed his columns.

The retreat was so hasty that three guns stationed midway between Molino del Rey and Casa Mata were left without supports.

On the following day, September 8th, at three o'clock in the morning, general Worth, with 3,500 foot, 300 dragoons and 12 guns, marched upon Molino del Rey and Casa Mata. Both of them were stone buildings and had outer defences formed by the brush-covered fences they were surrounded with. The three pieces of artillery posted betwixt those buildings opened fire and very soon were seized by the enemy having killed the cannoneers.

Colonel Emmanuel Maria Echeagaray placed himself with a battalion in the space between the two spots just mentioned; Rosas Landa helps him and colonel Balderas props his flank falling pierced by the enemy's balls. The Americans retrocede, but return reinforced and possess themselves of Molino. In such conditions Echeagaray feels obliged to retrocede towards Mexico.

Colonel Mc Intosh who had stood in front of him, could then support the attack upon Casa Mata, but he is twice wounded and his second, lieutenant-colonel Scott is killed; so the advance is suspended until the American artillery, from the Molino itself and from elsewhere prepares a new assault, that is repeated, upon the said house that succumbs at last.

Bold general Leon had died at Molino del Rey and general Perez who occupied Casa Mata, crossing some maize fields executed his retreat towards the capital.

The enemy, according to the report of Worth, lost in the actions of that day 9 officers killed and 47 wounded; 729 men of the troops killed and wounded and 46 dispersed, this total of 831 men being nearly the fifth part of his force in action. No other encounter had caused the enemy similar losses.

When the combat was ended, a Mexican reserve troop came in sight, put presently retroceded.

From the 9th to the 11th general Scott ordered batteries to be set up against Chapultepec and they opened fire on the 12th.

Chapultepec castle, which of a castle has nothing but the name, is a large building constructed on the hill that exists at the centre of the wood from which it derives its name and that, composed of large ahuehuetes, is surrounded by a stone fence. The small hill of Chapultepec, having walls with battlements, trenches below at the entrances and batteries above, counted for its defence on 832 men commanded by general Nicholas Bravo. The guns there existing were seven in number.

General Álvarez had entered the town of Mexico with the cavalry column by order of his superior.

But let us return to Chapultepec. Generals Pillow and Quitman, each with a strong column were ready for assault ever since the morning, general Worth serving them as a reserve at Tacubaya. The whole day of the 12th the artillery fired at the Mexican position whence they answered with their few guns to the numerous ones of the enemy.

In the night of that day, Santa Anna approached the forest with troops and established communications with general Bravo offering him to send help in due time. At the dawn of the 13th, the defenders of Chapultepec did not see around them other troops than the enemy's and not even one battalion that might come to reinforce them. The artillery continued the fearful duel and the walls surrounding the wood being broken down on several spots and the main building shattered by the cannon shot, the assailing columns were warned to rush on at a certain signal and they did so about eight o'clock in the morning. At those moments there appeared at the foot of the hill the battalion of the auxiliaries of San Blas under the command of valiant lieutenant-colonel Xicotencalt, coming from Mexico; during the ensuing fight that chief perished with half his force.

The western side of the hill offered more facilities of access and there Pillow's column drew near while the other approached from Southwest. General Pillow received a grave wound, but his forces did not cease to advance and at last the assailants arrived at the parapets that surrounded the so called castle of Chapultepec and the bayonets and the fusils, after the graphic expression of the American generals, were furiously crossed over them. The number overwhelmed those who were behind the parapets, these being once overcome; and then, through battlements, windows and balconies, fire came out from the interior of that building.

Of all the partial combats the youthful pupils of the Military College had partaken distinguishing themselves by their enthusiasm and they assisted at the ultimate defence that was made without any hope of triumph.

The troops of Pillow, of Quitman and a reinforcement of volunteers whom general Worth bade to go ahead, joined in a supreme effort and possessed themselves of Chapultepec castle on which the American regiments planted their flags. Five hundred and fifty Mexican prisoners fell into their hands, among whom there was the general, commander of the place, and 10 colonels. As for the pupils of the College six had died and four were wounded; and these latter with 37 more figured among the captives. Many of those boys, not yet adolescents, accepted heroically being sacrificed for their country.

Santa Anna, with reserve battalions, appeared in the neighbourhood of the wood when the castle was taken and then retreated. Afterwards, the Americans possess themselves of the sentries of Belem and St. Cosme and menace the Cittadel. The night comes on and the forces of the garrison of Mexico secretly withdraw to the town of Guadalupe without the enemy becoming aware thereof and so evacuate the capital. The Town Council, anxious to have measures of order dictated, send errand to the American head quarters about the evacuation of the place in the early morning of the 14th.

It was Quitman's chance to advance first to the centre of the town and to hang out the star flag over our National Palace.

Some American volunteers began sackage and Quitman endeavoured to contain them with partial success, when other forces proudly entered the capital with general Worth at the sound of drums and horns. The people of the town, with dire faces, contemplated the proud show of the vanquishers who shouted hurrahs to their hoisted flag, and formed more or less compact groups that as well might be of curious as of hostile people. Indignation exploded at length in those outraged souls incensed by the shame of defeat; the report of a shot was heard, nobody knowing whence it came, and then others and others followed directed against the victorious soldiers.

Some individuals of the national guard that had been dissolved by an express order before the withdrawal of the army; others taking the carabins or pistols they had in their houses, all armed themselves with the weapons they found at their reach and they who could not do more threw stones at the American troops. Roofs and towers were occupied by such groups that, exalted by the grief to see their country humiliated, joined without any direction obeying only their inner impulses that congregated them against the common enemy. Nobody is known to have headed that mutiny and yet the struggle came to take an alarming character.

Scott having arrived at the Palace ordered columns with artillery to clear the streets firing at every hostile group and thus the report of cannon deafened the airs for three hours. In such a situation night came on and the fire arms became dumb, to be heard once more, at the first dawn of the 15th, from all the corners of the town.

Many American soldiers, under the pretext of pursuing in their houses them who had fired from the roofs, committed robberies and other unspeakable violences.

What a dismal situation that of our capital abandoned by its vanquished defenders, a prey of the fright produced by the riot, abated, humiliated, defiled by the invading troops!

The town council named commissions to exhort the popular groups to hold their peace in order to avoid more disasters for the town; and, indeed, they began to become appeased, so that about noon of the 15th there was an end of that revolt which left some hundreds of dead bodies more spread over our sad capital and many more pools of blood eloquently telling, without speaking, there was no lack of patriotism in the Mexican people.

The American army having left Puebla with 12,000 soldiers, lost in the various combats fought in the Valley of Mexico, between dead and wounded 2,700 men, according to the statement of the chief in his official report in which he said the Mexican army must have undergone, also between wounded and



Rural guards of the present epoch

dead, a loss of 7,000 men, besides the 3,700 taken prisoners, with 13 generals among them, and that he had seized 20 colours, 65 ordnance pieces and 57 field guns.

The defence system adopted in the war against the Americans, from Veracruz up to Mexico, without linking in that town the places of defence, leaving them rather isolated as though on purpose to be beaten one after another by the enemy, was doubtlessly the principal cause of our constant defeats in this campaign. During the combats in the Valley of Mexico the reserves never arrived with opportunity and when they appeared at a moment they might have acted with good success as it happened in the fields of Padierna, they retreated instead of entering into fire. There was absolutely no initiative to be noted on our side; the blows were received one after another, without provoking a change of system, until our forces were lessening. Only on the North, in the battle at Angostura, the Mexican army rushed upon the enemy and in that battle our troops would have triumphed if they had continued in front of the enemy. On the other hand the invader never was harassed in the flanks or at the rear during his marches; he was allowed to occupy in all its extent the ground where he was advancing and only general Urrea sometimes harmed his rear in the environs of Monterrey when he was approaching Saltillo, the reason is that Santa Anna wanted to command the troops that were fighting and only those troops were to fight that were with him; and Santa Anna, as appears by all we have stated, combated badly, never foreseeing a disaster, never preparing for the second minute of an action, and never turning to profit the powerful reserves he had at his disposal. Never in our history there had been seen and never there was seen again so badly conducted a campaign whose ignominious remembrance is incensing. The valour of our soldiers was of no avail in this war!

The remnants of the army having left Mexico whence about 2,000 men of the national guard had been sent home, Santa Anna succeeded in getting general Joseph Joachim de Herrera to take the command of a most demoralised infantry division composed of 5,000 men and to march into the interior of the country experimenting desertions and disbandments on the road. Santa Anna himself started towards Puebla with 2,000 horse being joined afterwards by other troops; with all of them he threatened that town where there were only 1,000 Americans, attacked unsuccessfully a convoy coming from Veracruz and losing more and more soldiers by worrying marches, he received from the president of the Supreme Court, Emmanuel de la Peña y Peña who in virtue of the law took charge of the Presidency of the Republic, the order to yield the command of the force he had left, with the reserve that he would answer later on to the charges raised against him for his military conduct. He obeyed that order and went to seek shelter meanwhile in some town of Oaxaca.

Peña y Peña supported by general Herrera established government at Querétaro in the first decade of the month of October.

Herrera conserving the general command it was agreed at the beginning of November that Filisola was put at the head of the troops existing at Querétaro that had been reduced to 2,900 men; John Alvarez was named chief of the troops in the south amounting to 1,200 men and general Bustamante was to lead those of the west which, divided in fractions of from 800 to 50 soldiers, summed 3,900 men. As for the division surrendered by Santa Anna to general Isidore Reyes, it subsisted in the state of Puebla fighting with expeditionary columns of the enemy's.

More American troops landed at Veracruz and took the road towards the inland, 5,300 of them reaching Mexico in the first fortnight of December. Thus, from the coasts of Veracruz up to the capital the invaders had an effective of 24,000 soldiers and 18,000 more were camping in New Leon, Coahuila, Tamaulipas, New Mexico, Chihuahua, California and the coast of the Pacific.

Several encounters had taken place in Tamaulipas, Sonora and Sinaloa.

The Mexican government residing at Querétaro, received errands, through the person charged with the legation of Great Britain, from Trist, aiming at resuming the interrupted negotiations for peace. The American envoy, to prevent any loss of time, put the question with frankness, saying there was no agreement whatever possible unless Mexico ceded the Tamaulipeo territory from the Brávo to the Nueces,

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The national army

Troops of rural guard forming in parallel columns

(PRESENT EPOCH)

1891



Texas, New Mexico and Upper California; for this territory, Texas being considered as already belonging to the Republic of the North, a certain sum would be given and besides the large expenses of the war would not be recovered.

Our commissioners held out and at last they agreed in the conditions proposed stipulating that for the obliged cession the Mexican Government would be paid fifteen million dollars. The treaty was signed in the town of Guadalupe on February 2nd 1848 and therefore it has received the name of that city. It was ratified on May 30th.



Soldiers of the present epoch

Meanwhile elections had been effectuated and general Joseph Joachim de Herrera had come out as President of the Republic; he intrusted the ministry of war to general Arista.

On July 20th the last invading troops that had penetrated as far as the Valley of Mexico embarked at Veracruz.

End of the Federacy.—Dictature.—Revolution of Ayutla.—No sooner had our towns been evacuated by those troops than civil war returned: Paredes and others rose declaring they did not approve of the treaty concluded with the United States. In Yucatan a war of castes that had been glimmering, blazed up and later on, Indians of the mountains of Querétaro fought for a distribution of lands. Nor was there a movement on behalf of Santa Anna missing then, headed by Leonard Marquez. The rebels were overcome and treated with lenity.

The year 1848 was not yet at its end when the army manifested discontent because of the new projects of organisation planned by minister Arista who wished to reduce the army subjecting its expenses to the strictest economy.

In 1850 the said general Marianus Arista was elected President of the Republic and on January 8th 1851 Congress made the respective declaration. At the beginning of his career this general had belonged to the royalist army; afterwards he served centralism; but since he was unwilling to follow Paredes when this made his pronunciamiento at San Luis, it appears he had fixed his ideas and by accepting the office of War minister, in the period of Mr. Herrera, he let it be understood he was affiliated in the liberal party.

By a series of appropriate measures Arista had reduced the army so much as to leave only an effective of 12,000 men, his idea being to conserve only moralised forces and above all, to put an end to the financial disorder and to balance the budget by means of economies; when he was at the head of the War office, he issued regulations for the military service and manœuvres, thus manifesting that if he had no great capacity as a politician, there was at least the spirit of method and order in him. During his period the Military College was cared for and the change of the fire-lock for percussion-lock was made.

General Arista pacificly received office from the hands of his antecessor on the 15th of January, this being the first time that such act was performed so in the Republic. This President was much combated by the conservatives, but in spite of all difficulties he gave the troops an organisation, restored the lost discipline, had no recourse to levies and regulated the service. He contrived to maintain himself in office during two years. Factions rising about Veracruz, the pronunciamiento of the garrison of that port, and a revolutionary movement that took rise at Guadalajara and extended towards the interior, obliged him to resign the Presidency. That President being a true guardian of the law and a reformer of the military institution was unwilling to have any blood shed for his person.

Several encounters had taken place and others were preparing. To render the situation of the Republic still more dismal, on the North frontier, Chihuahua, New Leon and Tamaulipas were desolated by the war of the terrible Comanches and Apaches who, already in possession of fire arms through their commerce with the North-American peoples, had become more and more formidable warriors, and plundering, burning and slaughtering they fell over defenceless villages, fleeing before a superior or even equal number of enemies and fighting until death when they found no means to escape in safety, displaying so great an activity that not cavalry troop could compete with them in swiftness to get over large distances.

On January 6th, 1853, Arista, having resigned, was substituted, in virtue of the law, by the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, John B. Ceballos, who was presently involved in conspiracies the result of which was that by an agreement three generals commanding large divisions of revolted Government troops replaced him in February by general Lombardini while expecting from abroad Santa Anna whom those generals and their soldiers had proclaimed President. The brutal pretorian system resuscitated more vigorously, after the relative order that had obtained during the periods of Herrera and Arista.

Lombardini heedless of every other administrative affair busied himself in replacing in duty all the chiefs and officers that were in recess and in raising new troops; to that end he made use of the levy, embodying into the permanent army with the name of active bodies, several battalions of the national guard of the district of Mexico, imprisoning such as would not conform therewith.

In the States where anarchy was reigning there were to be read manifestos of one authority, protests of another and proclamations of every description that only served to render patent the general disorder the country was in.

Only the heroic virility with which we accepted and performed the sacrifices laid on us by the fatality of those historical precedents has been able at length to efface that ignominious epoch, so that we, washed with our own blood, may show us before the world worthy to be free and independent.

On March 17th, general Lombardini declared general Antony Lopez de Santa Anna was President of the Republic and on April 1st this landed at Veracruz; he was not long in arriving at Mexico and taking charge of government. Aided by his minister Lucas Alaman, an arrant conservative, he authoritatively centralised power in an absolute fashion.

Regarding the War department all the decrees of Arista were derogated; it was providenced the

national guards of the States should be submitted to the disposal of the commanding generals being incorporated into the army bodies; some fusillades were done to subdue the resistences offered here and there. By the month of July, Santa Anna counted on an army of 70,000 men.

Up to then that man had never shown perseverance in any exertion; and in how doleful a direction did he at last steer all his energies! He ceased to be versatile when he absolutely undertook to be a tyrant.

In order permanently to maintain under the arms 70,000 men, the levy must push its iniquities to the extreme and it was needful to increase the public treasure to sustain the expenses; so the taxes weighed heavily upon the worker and the landowner.

During several months Santa Anna continued domineering in the annihilated Republic, there occurring only some episodes of caste struggle in far away Yucatan and two invasions of filibusters that were rejected, in Lower California and Guaymas.

The tyrannical dispositions of Santa Anna commoved the department of Guerrero that had maintained itself, behind its mountains and the mortiferousness of its coasts, free from the load of the dictator's troops. There, in that territory scorched by its fiery climate, the old insurgent general John Alvarez held the command of the department and of the scanty regional forces existing therein. That great patriot cast a glance at his country, oppressed and desolate; he did not count the tyrant's troops; inspired by the ideas of freedom that impelled the first insurgents, he raised the cry of war hoisting as a political flag a platform that was subscribed at the village of Ayutla in March 1854.

Santa Anna himself undertakes to punish the rebel and with brilliant troops rushed on until he arrived at the shore of Acapulco; but the southerners had got ready to fight; colonel Comonfort defended the port and improvised troops attacked the flanks and rear of the powerful division led by the President. The heroic resistance of that port, the hostility met with everywhere determined the retreat of that division which is beaten, at first at Peregrino and then when it passed the river Mescala. On the 16th of May, Santa Anna came back to the capital leaving the revolution firm and unshaken in Guerrero whence it spread to Michoacan. Forces are concentrated at Iguala; but in the departments of Mexico, Puebla, Jalisco and New Leon the saviour Ayutla Plan is seconded. A brigade that, commanded by Zuloaga, ventured to penetrate into Guerrero, is obliged to adopt that plan and several of the Government troops are routed at different places. Santa Anna starts from Mexico towards the centre of Michoacan, but immediately retrocedes to the capital.

The movement was generalising; it was not a war of barracks mutinies; it was the Nation that rose at last; it was the revolution against tyranny, raised by the people and sustained by its men. In front of that impressing tide rising higher and higher on all sides, in front of the immense conflagration Santa Anna turns his eyes towards Veracruz and at last, left Mexico fleeing and embarked in that port on the 13th of August 1855.

The reactionist Haro y Tamariz rises in San Luis Potosi; general Carrera, in Mexico, becoming aware of the embarkment of Santa Anna, adheres to the Ayutla Plan, but reserves for himself the supreme command; Vidaurri, for his part, elated by easy triumphs he had won, considered himself justified to become the head of the new situation. Matters standing so, there appeared, including general Alvarez, four centres from which, according to the respective platforms, the convocation had to be issued for constituting the Nation anew. Public opinion, as was natural, declared most generally in favour of the Ayutla Plan in all its purity.

Comonfort tries to unite those centres of action and meets with facilities on that purpose; in this manner, general Alvarez, the initiator of the struggle, arrives at Cuernavaca at the head of his troops and issues a manifesto to the Nation explaining the reason of the Ayutla Plan and inviting, in compliance of the same, the representatives of the States to elect a provisory President of the Republic. On October 4th, 1855, those representatives emit their votes in favour of the said general. This now provisory President issues a convocation for the election of deputies to the Constituent Congress, excluding all clergymen from active and passive suffrage. On November 15th he arrived at Mexico where he was recei-

ved with demonstrations of sympathy and on the 23rd he decreed the suppression of the special courts, which resolution left the clergy and the army subjected to the common judges. The fueros of these privileged classes were thus abolished.

President Alvarez, having no ambition of command, after the fulfilment of the main part of the programme of the revolution he had initiated, resigned power unto general Comonfort and retired to Acapulco, modest amid his greatness, glorious with the record of the services he had done in the struggle for independence first and in the evolution toward liberty afterwards.

Constitution of 1857.—Reform war.—Comonfort, a man of lofty aims and noble sentiments, thought since the first day of his government, the reform was extreme in a country that had always lived under

very backward institutions; and in order to prevent the conflicts inherent to a rapid change, he pretended to moderate the cravings of revolution. A vain pretense in the moments of arduous expansion giving vent to the impulses of opinion.

The clergy is stirring against the reform and the old army, conserved by Comonfort in the same conditions of organisation it was left by Santa Anna, with no change in the personnel, soon allies with the clergy betraying the substitute President. The elements of the conservative



Modern buildings.—Court-yard of the infantry barracks n.º 13 at La Piedad

party get organised; at its head there appear the names of Haro y Tamariz, Osollos, Miramon and Mejia and in the fortified town of Puebla there concentrates a large nucleus of veteran troops that rise in revolt together with the recruits gathered by the priests; and a bloody encounter takes place in the vicinity of that town between those forces and the Government's, the former capitulating at last before Comonfort, having been vanquished in that town. So the year 1856 began.

The Legislative Body derogated Santa Anna's decree regarding the restoration of the Society of Jesus and dictated the law of disamortisation of the lands of the communities by which the ecclesiastical interests felt deeply harmed.

Meanwhile Spain presented the Executive an urgent reclamation about credits of her natives and England suscitated another different question.

Columns of from 2,000 to 4,000 men formed with defected troops of the old army and improvised bands well furnished with artillery and headed by Miramon, Osollos, Mejia and others, are routed at Puebla, at Coscomatepec and in the State of San Luis Potosí. The country was infested with gangs, fragments of the pursued forces of the conservative faction, gangs that, murdering foreigners, provoked the reclamations of Spain; gangs that desolated the territory, gangs which under the device of religion and fueros carried into effect the most iniquitous misdeeds against defenceless villages.

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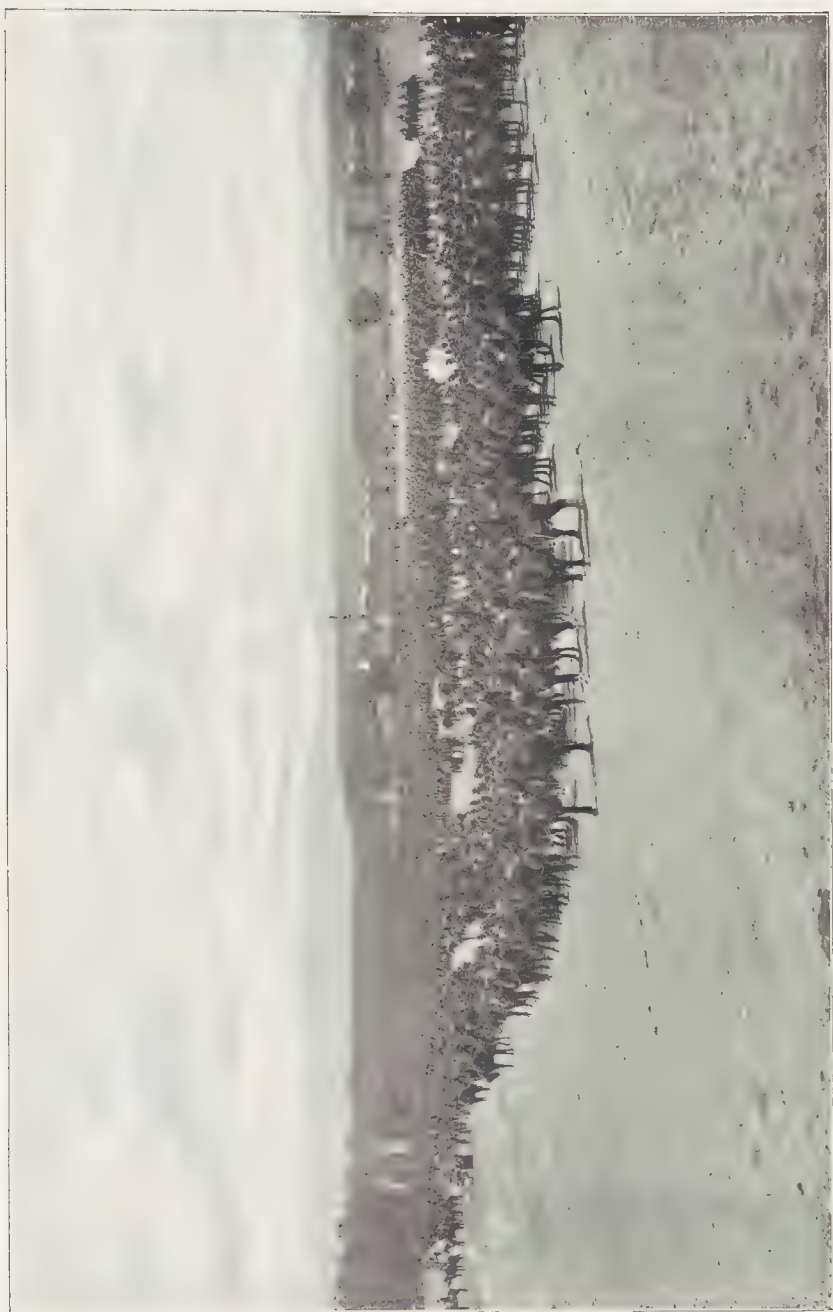
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The national army

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Troops of all arms in mass of columns

(PRESENT EPOCH)



General Blancarte, another reactionist, rebels with a brigade and advances to the environs of Guadalajara where general Parrodi takes him a prisoner and sunders him from the force.

During the time we are speaking of the reclamations of Spain exacerbated and the minister of that country declared the relations of his Government with ours broken off. While this passed and civil war disquieted the Republic, a most transcendental event was taking place amid the national representation.

A Constitution had been discussed and, after luminous controversies, approved. It was the expression of all the aspirations of the great liberal party, united and triumphant; it was the most beautiful realisation of the promise of the Ayutla Plan; magnific condensation where all the rights and all the liberties of man were to be seen guaranteed. That project dictated under the clash of fighting was not free of errors, but it remained open to receive reforms. Raised to the category of supreme constitutional law of the Republic, it was sworn by the representatives of the people and by president Comonfort on the 5th of February 1857.

The promulgation of the Constitution was met with attempts of resistance by the clergy in the form of protests, threats and excommunications.

Comonfort is elected by the people constitutional President of the Republic and Licentiate Benedict Juarez President of the Supreme Court of Justice; and no sooner was the corresponding declaration made than doubts arose regarding the political course of the first high functionary. By the press and before the Chamber accusations were not long in being uttered stating that Comonfort was preparing a coup d'Etat in order to break the institutions he had sworn on the 5th of February. That man had no faith in the cause he had served so much; after agreement with general Zuloaga they concocted at Tacubaya a plot against the liberal institutions and brought it to light on the 17th of December; Comonfort, breaking his legal titles of first magistrate of the Republic, accepts that plan which is soon disowned by Zuloaga himself and the conservatives who joined him. He fights with them in the capital and is vanquished; notwithstanding he is treated with consideration and allowed to leave the town with the few forces that remained faithful to him. On February 2nd 1858 he issued a manifesto at Jalapa advertising that he was going to expatriate himself and on the 7th he embarked at Veracruz bound for the United States.

The president of the Supreme Court, Benedict Juarez called, in virtue of the law, to substitute the President of the Republic, organised his government at Guanajuato, while the conservatives, at Mexico, named Zuloaga their president.

A majority of the States allied to fight for the Constitution of 1857.

Owing to Comonfort's behaviour the reactionists, having been abated everywhere, became on a sudden masters of the capital of the Republic; masters of a powerful triumphant division, masters of plentiful war equipments and of immense moral elements; and the constitutional party, mortally wounded, had to sustain a most rude, a most tremendous war. Osollos and Miramon, not losing time, rush into the interior and Juarez with his government retires to Guadalajara. Thence Parrodi starts to meet the enemy and fights with them at Salamanca; 12,000 men on both sides are struggling and the liberal forces lose the battle. That victory was the beginning of many others for the conservative party that very soon became dominant in Querétaro, in part of Jalisco, Zacatecas and San Luis where Osollos succumbs victim of a fever.

War was waged in all directions; and Juarez having embarked at Manzanillo, arrived and established his Government at the fortified port of Veracruz.

Never so stubborn a struggle had been sustained: the frontier general John Zuazua assaulted Zacatecas and San Luis which were in the hands of the reactionists; Miramon, most active, fights with Degollado at Atenquique, in the South of Jalisco and then, devouring distances, vanquishes Vidaurri's powerful wartried division, at Ahualulco de Pinos, near San Luis Potosi and returning towards Guadalajara about to be taken by Degollado and Ogazon, he obliges them to retrocede from the banks of the river Grande at Atequiza and consummates their defeat soon after, at San Joaquin, when the year 1858 was ending.

Amid such a state of things, generals Echeagaray first and Robles Pezuela thereafter, disavow presi-

dent Zuloaga and propose a reconciliation should be procured with the constitutional party, naming Miramon president but this does not accept, presents himself at Mexico, replaces deposed Zuloaga who by his turn designates him his substitute in office and with that character the campaign is carried on.

The year 1859 was beginning and Veracruz was the gloomiest ground of the picture the young president Miramon had at his sight. There the government of Juarez stood unshaken and so he resolved to rush upon that port with two strong divisions; after a tiresome march he arrived in front of that place in the first fortnight of March. Meanwhile, Leon and Guanajuato fell into the hands of the liberal leaders Iniestra, Pueblita and Régules.

Several other forces joined in the Bajío and general Degollado, indefatigable organiser of troops, appeared there with a division; he was joined by the Michoacan brigade that had taken Guanajuato and by general Zaragoza's, coming from the North; he advances with all of them and defeating on his way at Calamanda Mejía's force he makes his appearance before the capital establishing his head quarters at Tacubaya; he threatened the town, but remaining then inactive he left the enemy time to effect a concentration of troops.

Already on the 7th Marquez had arrived at the capital. Under the command of this clever conservative leader a division, composed of all arms, set out from Mexico on the 10th at 6 A. M., in direction to Tacubaya and vanquished Degollado's forces on the 11th, causing them 206 dead and taking from them 20 cannon and all their trains. On his side there was a loss of 288 men between dead and wounded.

During the night of that day the prisoners were court-martialled and the circumstance that not only the officers, but even the surgeons and civilians were executed, gave the fusillade a hairous character and was the motive of fulminant reproaches made by the press against the responsible.

Miramon whom we left in front of Veracruz found that place furnished with artillery and formidable fortifications; after several vain attempts upon advanced posts he saw himself obliged to order retreat and arriving at Puebla he learns that Degollado advances upon Mexico; by the mail he arrived there hastily and mounting on horseback he reaches the camp of Tacubaya when the action of the 11th was ended.

General Ogazon dominated with his forces the South of Jalisco; Vidaurri maintained himself in the Northern States and Juarez, when Miramon had turned his back to the walls of Veracruz, undauntedly dictated the most reformist laws that gave the epoch its character and the war we are speaking of its name being called the *reform war*.

That moment of our history was a solemn one. The great patrician fulminated, from the Sinai of our revolution, the thunderbolts that shattered retrocess.

Consistent with the accepted programme the constitutional government issued on the 12th of July 1859 the decree of the nationalisation of the ecclesiastical estates; on the 23rd the law on civil marriage was dictated; on the 31st the secularisation of the cemeteries was carried through and on August 11th the number of holidays multiplied by the Church was limited, a declaration being made regarding restrictions in the performances of worship.

The urgent measures dictated by the government of Juarez were estimated by the liberal party as the great resolution of a social problem whose unknown quantities had been fixed clearly and terminatively.

The liberal forces suffered defeats in the State of Veracruz, but general Coronado snatched the town of Tepic from the bandit Lozada who had become a politician and divers troops had convened in the Bajío where Degollado gathers 6,500 men with whom he moves onward up to the neighbourhood of Querétaro beating several bands of conservatives. Miramon rushes to encounter them at the head of 2,000 soldiers and after a fruitless conference about impossible arrangements between those two leaders, he routs with his relatively small force the multitude of collectitious folk of the liberals, at Estancia de las Vacas, October 13th 1859.

General Marquez who held a big command, with his head quarters at Guadalajara, had disobeyed Miramon and this, after the triumph we mentioned, makes a quick march to that town and deposes him.

The reactionist general Cobos at Oaxaca and Lozada at Tepic attain some vantages; the latter defeats

and kills the valiant general Coronado. Miramon, never reposing, beats Ogazon at Tonila, in the South of Jalisco, on the 24th of December.

The victories won by some liberal parties in sundry partial encounters being of little importance, the conservative cause was in a felicitous state at the beginning of the year 1860; its circle of action had widened; but Juarez continued at Veracruz and this port was the main fountain of resources for the country. Miramon resolved to make another attempt to seize it and organising a body of troops and preparing some ships of his own to come from the Havannah to cooperate by sea at his attacks by land, he starts from Mexico to the East, at the beginning of the month of February. His ships and forces come in sight of the port; the English minister, in the name of his government, in vain attempts an agreement



Modern buildings. — Court-yard of the 7th regiment

between Miramon and Juarez; the former opens hostilities and defeated by sea without attaining any vantage by his attacks on land, sees himself in the sad condition to be obliged to retrocede once more from that town where the liberal government shows itself unshakeable.

Meanwhile, big successes were obtained against the conservatives in the interior of the country: Ogazon and general Leander Valle triumph in Colima; the constitutionalist general Joseph Lopez Uraga undid general Romulo Diaz de la Vega's division at Loma Alta, taking him prisoner with 1,000 men, 18 pieces of artillery and 30 cars of ammunitions. The victorious leader, joining with Ogazon and Valle, unites 8,000 soldiers; he makes a rude attack on Guadalajara whither Miramon hastened in support and there the former is repelled with gross losses by Woll who defended the place, being wounded and taken prisoner, general Zaragoza supplying him in the command.

The shock of those troops was most bloody, Woll being wounded, as was Uraga.

Miramon arrived at the town where the alluded to action took place and rushed on the troops in

retreat, but shrinks back at the sight of the energetic attitude taken by them to resist him at the Cuesta de Sayula.

Gonzalez Ortega, constitutional governor of Zacatecas, destroyed the brigade of generals Ramirez and Gajen taking them 1,000 prisoners and 10 guns, while general Pueblita took the place of Celaya by sheer force on the 30th of June.

In such a state of things, having enemies on the South and West of Jalisco, Aguascalientes being occupied as was Zacatecas and San Luis Potosi, Miramon chose to station himself in the centre of the field of action and took the road to Lagos, at the beginning of July. Zaragoza and Ogazon advanced upon Guadalajara where general Severus del Castillo makes ready for defence. The former of the two liberal leaders mentioned, swiftly directs himself to the East, by the road to the Bajío, with 5,000 men while Ogazon with 3,000 holds Castillo under check. On August 8th Zaragoza incorporates in the forces of Gonzalez Ortega, under whose orders were already with their columns Doblado, Antillon and Berriozabal. On the 10th Miramon offers battle, in the neighbourhood of Silao, with his first corps, to those forces and the struggle having been engaged in the open field since 8 o'clock A. M., after three hours of strenuous fights the conservatives were vanquished. In Gonzalez Ortega's report the following paragraph was to be read: «After an eager combat in which Mexican blood has been profusely shed, Michael Miramon has been completely routed to-day by the forces under my command, leaving in my power his immense train of artillery, his arms and ammunitions, the standards of his corps and hundreds of prisoners, among whom there are several generals and a multitude of colonels and officers.»

General Gonzalez Ortega, having for his second Zaragoza, advances upon Guadalajara and gathering more troops lays siege on that town defended by general Severus del Castillo with 7,500 men against 18,000 soldiers; 160 cannon they had besieged and besiegers together.

Marquez having returned to service is sent by Miramon from Mexico to succour the capital of Jalisco and general Philip B. Berriozabal puts himself in observation from Toluca; when he arrived at ten leagues from Guadalajara, the beleaguers detach some forces in combination with Berriozabal's and the column of Marquez is completely routed, after which the besieged town capitulates having been heroically defended during forty days.

We omit giving account of events of minor importance in order to fix our attention only in the main part of the grave successes in the historic moment we are dealing of.

The news of the disasters happened in Jalisco caused a panic at Mexico, but Miramon never dismayed and actively organised new elements of war. With a brigade he moves upon Toluca and by surprise defeats the federal garrison of that place.

Juarez, confiding with clear-sightedness on a favourable and definitive change, convoked for general elections of the Republic on November 6th.

Gonzalez Ortega's forces marched upon Mexico and when they came near, consisted, although they were not united, of a total of 16,000 men; intrepid general Miramon, hoping to beat them by retail, leaves the capital with 8,000 soldiers and 30 pieces of ordnance taking with him as lieutenants Marquez, Velez, Negrete, Cobos and Ayestaran.

For the liberal troops concentration was not difficult and on December 22nd the two armies came in sight of one another at Lomas de Calpulalpam where the conservative forces were totally beaten, leaving in the hands of the vanquishers, trains, ordnance, park and thousands of prisoners. The triumph of the constitutional arms was definitive and of immense transcendence. Mexico could not be defended and the heads of the reaction who had arrived there after their defeat, left the town with a few hundreds of men on the 24th. President Miramon withdrew from the country some days after the events we have mentioned. That valiant general, obstinate in defending a cause of whose errors he was aware, deserves, notwithstanding, our salutation, at the supreme hour of mishap, for his intrepidity, for his undeniable military merit.

In the morning of December 25th 1860, a part of the constitutionalist army made its entrance into

the capital of the Republic. On the 1st of January 1861 there united at Mexico 28,000 men of the same army and effected their triumphal defile through the streets of the town.

A few successes were sufficient for the triumph of a cause that counted on public opinion and was sustained by the majority against the troops of the old army.

Already on the 11th of the said month of January, Juarez who had left his ramparts of Veracruz, was installing his government in the National Palace.

On May 9th 1861, after the customary solemnities, the first constitutional Congress opened its sessions. President Juarez, in his inauguration speech, explained the country was deeply harmed by the war, but as for institutions, progress had been made under the clashing of arms, the Reform laws having been carried through rendering impossible any future overthrow of the Constitution of 1857.

War continues.—European intervention.—Many conservatives, among them some archbishops and bishops, had been deported to Europe where they endeavoured to bring about an armed foreign intervention in our country. Very bitter times were preparing for the Republic. The pretended intervention would not make reaction triumphant; but this eagerly tried to procure the defeat of the liberals, heedless of any jeopardy for the independence.

In spite of its defeat, that army of funest remembrance elated by its fueros, prone to mutiny, stained with defection, that army coming from the viceregal epoch, whilst continuing with the Spanish technical drill, was imperial with Iturbide, pretorian with Santa Anna, discontent with Arista who somewhat reformed its institutions and regulations, struggling with Miramon when it had in front the soldiers of the people defeated, we say, by the liberal army proceeding from the insurgent masses, it was still going to struggle through its shattered but wartried remnants. Indeed, civil war resuscitated more eagerly sustained by Marquez, Mejia, Cobos, Vicario and others who acknowledged Zuloaga as their President. These men, encouraged by their party fellows in Europe, brave and undertaking, made their presence cruelly felt in the State of Mexico and other neighbouring ones. It must be stated the numerous troops raised by the liberals at the supreme hour in all the States of the Republic, had considerably diminished at the close of the year 1860 when the struggle was considered at its end, many of them being allowed to return to their homes.

Marquez, roving over Michoacan, orders the reformer Melchior Ocampo, illustrious ex-minister of foreign Affairs of Juarez at Veracruz, to be shot having captured him at a manor of his. General Santos Degollado starts with a column to avenge the death of that eminent citizen and is defeated being killed on the battle field on June 15th 1861. Eight days later the same disaster happens to the young general Leander Valle who, taken prisoner, is court-martialled by the famous Marquez.

On the 25th of June, under the command of this leader and of Zuloaga, 1,500 horsemen arrive at Mexico and flee from its canseys being burnt by the fire of a part of the garrison.

After the triumph of the Constitution our financial affairs showed a chaotic state of bankruptcy and therefore it is explainable that it was agreed to suspend the payment of the foreign conventions. In this a precious conjuncture was found by those who counting on the propitiousness of Napoleon, in Europe, were looking for a means to offer an ostensible reason for the armed intervention that was being attempted against Mexico.

Marquez and Zuloaga, after several combats with the forces of the constitutional Government and after brisk marches with a body of 3,500 men, make halt at Jalatlaco on August 13th and are surprised there by the van brigade of general Gonzalez Ortega's division, that brigade consisting of 800 men under the command of general Porphyrius Diaz who attacks the enemy on a sudden, disconcerts him and vanquishes him, the victory being consummated on the 14th by the arrival of the remainder of the division of which the brigade was a part.

The act of parliament by which payment of the foreign debt was stopped caused the ministers of Spain, France and England to declare the relations with our country broken off and their respective go-

vernments approved of that first hostile step. In round figures, the foreign debt amounted to 82,000,000 dollars, corresponding to England approximately 70,000,000, to Spain 9,400,000 and to France 2,600,000.

The Cesar who during so many years influenced the destinies of Europe, longed to get America under his rule and the moment was propitious.

On October 31st 1861 there was signed at London a convention of the three powers allied against Mexico to reclaim the payment of the debt corresponding respectively to England, Spain and France. It was agreed that none of the three contracting powers should acquire any territory nor mingle directly with our interior government.

The remainders of Marquez' forces formed again a respectable nucleus of 3,000 men that were shattered by general Tapia, at Real del Monte, on September 19th. Many other encounters take place in the territory of Mexico, Querétaro and Puebla, while Lozada and Rivas, starting from Tepic and joining the reactionist bands existing in Jalisco, maintained the struggle ardent in that State. At the end of the year 1861 the President issued a decree of amnesty: several conservative leaders seeing a foreign war was drawing near, offered their services against the same and they were accepted. The most important of them were Negrete and Velez.

We now enter into a new period of history.

On the 6th of December 1861 there appeared off Veracruz a powerful Spanish squadron composed of 16 men of war, 8 transport ships and 5,900 soldiers to be landed. French and English ships were near our coasts, but they had not yet received instructions to begin hostilities. On the 14th the Spanish chief requested the Veracruz government of general La Llave to evacuate the port and the castle of St. John of Ulua; and as the government of Juarez was endeavouring to avoid the opening of hostilities in order to see whether an arrangement was to be attained by diplomatic means, it granted the evacuation of the port and the castle which, in virtue thereof, were occupied by Spanish forces on December 17th.

The menace was being realised; and Mexico, weak, shattered by her struggles, her heart bitten by treason, prepared for a terrible fight, constrained by the imperious command of a tremendous exigency. With a luminous perspicaciousness, a French writer, prince Bibesco, in his work *Au Mexique, 1862, Combats*, etc., speaking of our country said: «...The shere necessity of defending has revealed that nation the vigour it was capable of. We have taught it at our expense the art of waging war; she has drawn out of her patriotism that great *virtue*: perseverance in the struggle.» And M. Noix, in his *Expédition du Mexique*, manifests that for our good luck we had been obliged to show ourselves how we were and what we were able to perform, because the tutelage and constant humiliations the foreigners abusively submitted us to must be deemed painful and unsupportable by our governments.

General Prim, count of Reus, came to put himself at the head of the Spanish expedition when the French and English squadrons with troops to be landed were steering towards our seas.

On the 10th of January 1862, Prim, commissioner for Spain, Jurien for France and Dunlop, for England, addressed from Veracruz a manifesto to the nation, telling they came to exact the fulfilment of the treaties and compromises adjusted with their countries and desirous that under their protection Mexico should give herself freely a strong government, able to put an end to anarchy. The commissioners exchanged communications with the government and this let them know it would procure to satisfy their claims after they had been revised and their forces had been withdrawn.

Miramón who had not made up his mind to accept the intervention in an express manner, pretended to land at Veracruz but was hindered therein by the English commodore.

New communications were crossed between our Government and the commissioners of the league and in consequence thereof negotiations are opened, at first by the minister of foreign Relations, Doblado, and general Prim who conferenced at La Soledad, near Veracruz on February 19th. They at once sign the preliminaries of agreements and among them the government of Juarez is acknowledged to be treated with and it is adjusted that to spare the foreign forces the diseases of the coast, they are permitted to canton in the temperate zone, advancing as far as Orizaba under the conception that they would return

to their starting point if the commenced negotiations were broken off. Under such conditions general Prim, aware of the situation, explains his government the convenience to agree with the government of Juarez, this being recognised throughout the country, all things regarding the claims of Spain.

Meanwhile the reactionists were suffering new defeats every day.

General Zaragoza, illustrious by his antecedents, was intrusted with the command of the East army that from the first moment came into contact with the invading forces.

The traitor John N. Almonte, foremost among them who in Europe intrigued against Mexico, arrived at Veracruz invested with certain faculties by Maximilian of Habsburg, an Austrian prince whom Napo-



Modern buildings.—St. Lazarus barracks

leon III had already chosen to institute an empire in Mexico. The plotters against the Government joined Almonte and they were favoured by the French commissioner and by general Lorencez; this fact is the object of a reclamation from the constitutional Government and with this motive the commissioners meet at Orizaba on the 9th of April. The French commissioner insisting in staying Almonte and his friends because their manœuvres, their intrigues, were the root to start an empire from, as Napoleon wanted, and to assure the acquisition of Sonora and Lower California, the Spanish and English commissioners broke the tripartite alliance; Prim in an absolute manner and Wyke with a provisory character.

Then both of them declared their troops would withdraw the behaviour of the French representation being a violation of the conventions of London and La Soledad.

Thus, at last, Mexico remained face to face with France. The moment was a solemn one: America and Europe were pending on our acts.

The French intervention and Maximilian's empire.—On the 19th of April general Lorencez with French

troops occupied Orizaba whose barracks were left by the Spaniards going to reembark; by and by Almonte had there a deed drawn up and then others in the invaded towns causing himself to be acknowledged as President. Afterwards he formed a show government and organised his Cabinet.

French troops made their first discharge upon a republican force killing five of them.

Zaragoza considering evident the French would not retrocede to the line they held in Veracruz when they were allowed to advance in virtue of the agreement at La Soledad, made a concentration of troops at the rear. The French division, 6,000 men strong, undertook its march towards Puebla. Two thousand soldiers hinder their passage for eight hours on the summits of Acultzingo causing them several dead. On May 4th the said division arrived at Amozoc distant four leagues from Puebla. At dawn of May 5th 1862 the French troops receive order to advance upon fort Guadalupe after a reconnoitring done by a squadron of light cavalry.

General Zaragoza had learned in the early morning that general O'Horan had beaten Marquez at Mexico hindering him to incorporate with the French troops.

Zaragoza's primitive disposition regarding the distribution of his troops obeyed the idea the enemy would attack on the weakest spots and not that which offered more topographical difficulties and was easiest to be defended; but seeing with surprise that the advance was directed upon Guadalupe hill, he executed a quick shift of front. On the other hand the French artillery was ill placed to direct their fires and to the infantry alone the attack upon the fortified spots was commended.

The assaulting forces really effected a long diagonal march under the fire of the Mexican artillery; they made a rapid ascension over rough ground and appeared behind some rocks, in line, to rush on, as they actually did, to the very foot of our trenches; and thrice they executed this operation, having always been repelled owing to the serenity and valour of the general in chief and of his troops, less in number than the French, and to the fact that he was admirably seconded by Negrete, Berriozabal, Alvarez and Porphyrius Diaz to whom it was necessary to repeat the order not to continue advancing upon the enemy in retreat. The French lost that day 482 men, a quite respectable figure considering their effective; among them there were 15 officers killed and 20 wounded, 162 soldiers killed and 285 wounded or dispersed; besides, 24 prisoners were taken from them. Our losses consisted of 83 killed, 132 wounded and 12 dispersed.

The enemy having been repelled, camped in sight of Puebla and then undertook a retrograde march towards Orizaba.

The Congress of the Union issued a decree granting honours to them who fought for their country at Acultzingo and Puebla.

The French prisoners were set at liberty and furnished with means to reincorporate with the force they belonged to.

When Lorencez had come back to Orizaba, general Marquez called on him to tell him 2,500 men of his command were about to incorporate with the French troops, but were hindered to do so by the republican forces. The French leader granted the reactionist the aid of one battalion that helped his force to triumph at Barranca Seca.

Zuloaga and Cobos would not conform to the invasion; Marquez cunningly won over the greatest part of their forces and led them to Orizaba as we have seen while those generals left their country for the United States.

In June the invading army received the succour brought by general Douay named second chief; a part of the convoy was snatched away on the march by republican troops.

General Zaragoza having increased his forces with new contingents and general Gonzalez Ortega with a division of 6,000 men forming part of that army, advanced upon the town of Orizaba where the French raised parapets to defend themselves. The attack of the East army upon that place was prepared for the early morning of the 14th and to this effect the general in chief with 4,500 men, occupied the lower part of the town, while Gonzalez Ortega with his division posted himself after an occult march on the Borrego

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Ignatius Comonfort. Sosthenes Rocha.

John Alvarez

Leander Valle. Raymond Corona

Jesus Gonzalez Ortega

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hill dominating the town by the South; but this division, having been tired by taking its positions where it brought its artillery, is surprised in the night of the 13th by two French companies which, ignoring on what force they were rushing, made the attack. Gonzalez Ortega's corps, in the darkness, discharged against one another; becoming disconcerted they retired in disorder, the battalions taking one another for enemies. That fact frustrated the intent of Zaragoza who was obliged to withdraw, the enemy not daring to pursue him.

When Napoleon saw the Mexican enterprise demanded greater forces than he had imagined at the beginning, he disposed that general Forey, with more troops, should go to reinforce those sent before and take the command of the whole corps. In September this chief arrives and them by a brief circular, he dissolves Almonte's government that was creating difficulties being odious to the Mexicans and troublesome to the French.

On September 8th illustrious general Zaragoza died at the town of Puebla that beheld the action of the 5th of May he achieved against the French army. A fever was the cause of his death.

The troops sent from France arrive at Mexico and new forces increase those of the allied traitors led by Marquez. They were looked at with repugnancy by the soldiers composing the invading army who disdained treating them as comrades. Forey disposes a military expedition by sea against the port of Tampico which is taken, but the expedition does not go ahead and later on returns to Veracruz. General Bazaine, chief of that place, orders operations to be carried through in the neighbourhood and is opposed by the Mexican general Diaz Miron who, with about 1,800 men, keeps harassing the enemy at his heels.

At the middle of December, 5,700 Frenchmen, under the command of general Douay, advance from Jalapa towards the interior, in the direction of Puebla, and general Aurelian Rivera, with guerrillas, harasses them on their march. Our Government was furnishing Puebla with artillery and forming an army of the centre under the command of Comonfort that came to offer his services and another of reserve to be led by general Doblado.

At the beginning of the year 1863 the French having received reinforcements decided resolutely to undertake the campaign. They numbered 28,824 men and 50 pieces of artillery, and moreover disposed of 2,500 traitors.

A squadron of the enemy's bombarded Acapulco about the middle of January. On the 16th of March the invading troops appeared before Puebla defended by general Gonzalez Ortega who was the successor of Zaragoza in the command, and on the 17th the operations to besiege the town began with the occupation of the hill of San Juan. Comonfort, with a division, remained posted between that town and Mexico.

On the 19th the thundering of cannon announced the beginning of a long struggle. On the following days the French commence to establish their parallels, sustaining daily combats; some cavalry squadrons leave the town to put themselves into contact with Comonfort. The French attack the fort San Javier after destroying it in part by cannon fire and are repelled; on the 28th the attack is renewed with more forces and the besiegers retrocede once more. The fort was falling in ruins and must be abandoned, the forces stationing themselves on neighbouring spots; they are attacked on the 29th by four big columns and lose three ordnance pieces under the ruins where there remain 200 killed Mexican soldiers while 300 wounded are carried away. The blocks of houses near San Javier keep up until the first of April.

Behind a ruined building the Mexican soldiers took the rear, and so disputed the ruins foot by foot.

On the 2nd of April, the Mexican cavalry beats with a vantage, at the rear of the circumvallation line, the French cavalry which retires. Meanwhile the enemy assaults the St. Mark barracks of general Berriozabal's line and penetrates into the court-yard; in the corridors general Diaz, commander of the spot, keeps up an eager fight all the night long forcing the French to retrocede. Something similar occurred in the morning of the 3rd, on St. Augustin square. On the 4th, bombs are thrown upon the temple situate on that square and transformed into a fort, and then an assault is undertaken proving a failure; on the 6th a French column enters by Miradores street and is obliged to return losing 37 pri-

soners; on the 8th colonel Calderon reconquers the Pulque sentry and in the early morning of the 13th the republican colonel O'Horan leaves the place with a cavalry column with the aim to inform Comonfort that victuals are wanted. On the 15th, the first Zacatecas brigade advancing from its post, tries to hinder the French in their approach works and sustains several skirmishes at El Carmen and La Teja, until the 19th, when the beleaguers attack St. Augustin square and adjacent blocks. Large breaches having been opened in that of St. Agnes two Zuave columns enter, but are made to retrocede by dint of blows with the fusil and the bayonet; however, after a second charge they remain masters of a part of the block. Auza who defended the spot, retires to the church.

On the same day, at half a journey's distance from Puebla, at San Juan Tianguistengo, general Echeagaray captured a large amount of cattle and sheep belonging to the enemy.

In the afternoon of the 24th, the French blow up by means of mines, a part of the Pitimini block occupied by the forces of colonel Padrés. A part of them perished, burnt by the explosion or buried under the ruins; but the other part bravely defended the spot when it was assaulted, making the enemy retrocede twice. On the morning of the 25th the enemy blew up another block of St. Agnes ward. Over the smoking breaches two columns advance at double quick pace and colonel Auza with the 3rd and 5th of Zacatecas opposes them during the space of seven hours, amid the downfallen walls, until he caused the enemy to turn leaving in power of the besieged 137 prisoners of the Zouave regiment and on the ground of the affray 400 dead. St. Augustin, El Carmen and the prolongation of the line of Alatorre's command had also been the object of unsuccessful attacks.

Ammunitions began to fail and it was enjoined by the general order of the place, they should be economised as much as possible. On the 29th, general Gonzalez Ortega advertised Comonfort that his victuals were being exhausted and solicited his cooperation to break the siege on May 2nd. Comonfort answered he would bring him victuals.

On the first days of May an exchange of prisoners was effected between besiegers and besieged.

On the 5th O'Horan had an encounter with the enemy's troop, at three leagues from Puebla. On the 6th the van of Comonfort's division advances with O'Horan with the aim to allow that division to introduce a convoy into Puebla; but the van is repelled with losses. On the 7th general Forey sent Gonzalez Ortega the errand that he, admiring the defence of Puebla, was disposed to grant the most honourable capitulation. On the 8th, in the morning, outside the town and in direction to San Lorenzo a frequent firing was to be heard; indeed, general Comonfort was trying to bring provisions into the place, having echeloned his forces for that purpose from San Cosme to San Lorenzo; but the main part was completely routed losing about 1,000 prisoners and 8 pieces of artillery. So the Mexican general found himself obliged to retrocede with about 2,500 men. Owing to such a discomfiture the place had no hope to receive the help and provisions it needed and Gonzalez Ortega wrote to Comonfort asking for his concurrence to support his sally which he prepared for the 14th.

There were daily combats succeeding one another at Puebla between the forces of both sides; on the 12th a crowd of hungry women and children, waving a white flag, ventured to leave the town, but was repelled by the French troops with their guns. The night of the 14th came on and in vain they waited for the signals Comonfort was to make of his approach in order to begin the operation of the besieged troops against the besiegers. The report of cannon became very perceptible on the 15th and as during all that day no news came from the army of the centre, Gonzalez Ortega convoked a council of war wherein it was agreed to ask the enemy to let them leave the beleaguered town with arms and flags. This was denied and then, in a new council, considering that the cannon park was scarcely sufficient to serve the guns for three hours, that the victuals were exhausted and that there was no hope for succour from without, at least for many days, it was resolved, according to a suggestion of Gonzalez Ortega, the fusils should be destroyed, the guns burst asunder, the troops dissolved and the staff of generals and officers should surrender unto the conqueror without asking for any guarantee. All this was carried through in the morning of May 17th 1863. The general in chief told Forey that deeming it impossible

to defend the place any longer for want of victuals he had dissolved the garrison and destroyed the armament, and that he surrendered unto him with his staff of chiefs and officers.

Such was the end of that episode of the siege of Puebla by which during sixty two days our military history became illustrated with glorious pages.

At the beginning of the operations upon the heroic town, Forey held a review with 22,000 French soldiers and 8,000 traitors. Gonzalez Ortega had 18,000 soldiers and general Comonfort from Mexico to the neighbourhood of Puebla counted on a division of 6,000 men. On different occasions, we have seen, sections of cavalry left Puebla being unable to reenter. It may be reckoned that those cavalry forces amounted to about 2,600 men, that there were 2,200 wounded and that 1,900 of the besieged succumbed.



Modern establishments.—National artillery arsenal. First hall of the Museum

The commanders and officers surrendered themselves as prisoners and Forey, who then occupied Puebla, sent them to France, but most of them contrived to evade on their way to Veracruz.

In the interior of the country the reactionists aided the foreign enemy and Lozada around Tepic continued fighting against colonel Corona.

On May 29th it was decreed the Federal Powers should be transferred to San Luis Potosí; on the 31st the period of sessions of Congress was closed and then, Juarez and his government staff leave for that town.

On June 9th, Forey effected his entrance into Mexico and addressed to the nation a manifesto containing an actual program in which it was stated that the properties of the clergy nationalised by Juarez, should remain in the hands of their new possessors and that liberty of worship ought to obtain in Mexico. Thus then, the essential part of the Reform laws was to be maintained in vigour.

By this manifestation of the French leader who spoke in the name of Napoleon, the conservative band suffered a cruel disenchantment.

Forey designates thirty four select persons charging them to elect a triumvirate that was to exercise power, and two hundred and fifteen notables of the capital to constitute an assembly that ought to determine the definitive form of government for the country. The triumvirate composed of John N. Almonte, Pelagius Labastida, archbishop of Mexico and general Marianus Salas, with their suppliers bishop Ormaechea and Ignatius Pavon, proved clearly conservative.

On the 27th the provisional government of the triumvirs nominated their cabinet.

On July 7th the assembly of notables was constituted and on the 10th their resolution about the government that ought to rule Mexico was given in the following terms:

«1.^o The Mexican nation adopts as the form of her government a moderate hereditary monarchy with a catholic prince. 2.^o The sovereign will assume the title of Emperor of Mexico. 3.^o The imperial crown of Mexico is offered to H. I. and R. H. Prince Ferdinand Maximilian archduke of Austria for himself and his descendants. 4.^o In the case that by circumstances impossible to be foreseen, archduke Ferdinand Maximilian should not come to take possession of the throne offered him, *the Mexican nation refers to the benevolence of H. M. Napoleon III, emperor of the French, to hint at another catholic prince.*»

There were no debates nor were they wanted: the transcribed resolution emanated not from the opinion or the will of the present, but from the deliberation of the emperor of the French.

On July 11th it was declared the triumvirate should be denominated *Regency*.

In July and August the French troops occupied places around Mexico, being constantly harassed by the republicans; in Jalisco the reactionists kept up a rude war causing it to be felt everywhere.

Forey being ascended marshal of France, is called to his country to perform the duties of his high office and from October 1st general Bazaine is entrusted with the command of the operations in Mexico. Napoleon, when addressing this general, manifested it was convenient to reduce more and more the French elements of war, substituting them gradually by those of the invaded country.

It became urgent for Maximilian to come and form his own situation although ever dependent on the influence of the French emperor.

When the respective Mexican commission went to offer him the crown exhibiting before him the act of the notables, he explained that before going to Mexico he wished to see the call made upon him ratified by a popular vote. The question was to form acts about the matter in the towns occupied by the French and thus that singular plebiscite was effectuated.

Figuerola and Cravioto continued waging war against the Franco-Mexican forces operating at the South of Mexico.

Worthy of a special mention is the bold expedition undertaken in those times by general Porphyrius Diaz crossing with a column of the three arms the states of Querétaro, Mexico, Puebla, Guerrero and Oaxaca, having started from San Juan del Rio.

Bazaine had busied himself with the study of the situation of the interior of the country and made ready to undertake his operations. To that effect he counted on 35,000 French soldiers and 8,000 Mexican allies.

He regulated the service of the line established between Mexico and Veracruz; he left Puebla as also the capital well furnished and disposing two strong columns of 8,000 men each with some reserve brigades, he started towards the centre of the Republic. One of these columns was to be commanded by Castagny having Marquez at his orders and ought to march through Toluca and Acámbaro to Morelia; and the other headed by general Douay, was to advance through Querétaro and Lagos in order to attain Guadalupe. These forces set out at the end of October and at the beginning of November Bazaine himself joined Castagny leaving the capital entrusted to general Neigre. Castagny was obliged to modify his scheme and send Marquez to Morelia which he occupies on the 30th having been evacuated by general Berriozabal. Douay entered Guanajuato on December 8th and Bazaine, disposing of Castagny's forces, arrives at Silao on the 12th, in pursuit of general Doblado who in combination with Uraga, gathered 10,200 men at Piedra Gorda; but these two liberal leaders fraction their troops and Doblado takes towards the

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General Philip B. Berriozabal

MINISTER OF WAR AND MARINE AT THE EPOCH THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN (1899)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO





North whither Bazaine did not want to pursue him. Douay had marched upon Uraga and this made a quick rush on Marquez, at Morelia, attacking him with actual fury on December 18th; Marquez, wounded in his face, resisted and Uraga, leaving 800 dead and wounded on the field, having the French on his rear, retreats through Zamora and manœuvring with cleverness arrives at Zapotlan el Grande on January 2nd 1864. Meanwhile Bazaine advanced and on January 5th occupied Guadalajara left on the 3rd by Arteaga who wanted to incorporate with Uraga.

Mejia marched upon San Luis and general Negrete retroceded before him stage by stage. On December 20th the constitutional government advertised by Negrete and aware of Uraga's failure before Morelia, retires from San Luis Potosí, declaring it would settle at Saltillo. Negrete leaves San Luis in the hands of Mejia and afterwards returns to attack him without obtaining any success in spite of the valour displayed during the attack by general Sosthenes Rocha. Bazaine having arrived at Guadalajara becomes aware of the serious difficulties raised at Mexico by archbishop Labastida in defence of the temporal properties of the clergy, regresses to the capital with a column of 3,000 men in the middle of January 1864. Miramon with staffs of officers to form a division arrives at Guadalajara and Bazaine departing tells him he had entrusted the command of that place to colonel Garnier; so the ex-president resigns the office he held unwilling to be subaltern to an inferior officer.

Juarez who had arrived at Saltillo, seeing Vidaurri refusing to deliver unto him the federal revenue of the frontier custom-houses and those of Matamoros and Tampico and wishing above all to avoid a grave dissension, passed on as far as Monterrey, where he is disowned by that general. He returns to Saltillo, relying in his retreat on Doblado's troops and declares a traitor to his country that rebel leader who put himself into communication with the enemy. Very soon the said Vidaurri, abandoned by his troops and pursued, fled to the United States. Then president Juarez went once more to Monterrey and settled his government there.

On April 9th, 1864, Maximilian, after having had exhibited before himself a heap of acts of adhesion to his person, accepted the throne of Mexico; from Miramar where he resided, he dictated sundry dispositions; he dissolved the regency and named John N. Almonte his lieutenant and representative until he would arrive to perform himself his high office. With his new character he signed a loan arrangement and a treaty adjusted with Napoleon III whereby it was agreed, among other things, that the French army in Mexico would be reduced as soon as possible to an effective of 25,000 men. It was also stipulated by this treaty the Juarez law about nationalised estates should be actually carried into effect.

In truth, the government that was going to be established in Mexico should be a dependency on Napoleon III and consequently a menace to the republican principles of Spanish America; a menace also to the federal integrity of the North and a restraint to their preponderance. The United States of America knew quite well what the blows of the French Cæsar aimed at; but considering their civil war, they were obliged to forbear; nevertheless, Mexico's constitutional government was constantly acknowledged by the government of the Northern Republic and by no one else.

Maximilian arrived at Veracruz on May 29th and after a short stay at Orizaba and Puebla, made his entrance at Mexico on June 12th 1864.

The struggle continued. Flying columns pursued several liberal parties, well or ill organised, with or without a direction, but all of them fighting for the Republic and for independence. The liberal chiefs of expeditions, without a centre of action, at long distances from one another, acted to make war for their own account, it being a pity they lived at the expense of the country.

At the sight of the advances made by the invaders, many a liberal vacillated and believed the constitutional government would fall down amid the ruins of the towns and the clash of the combats and they caused to vacillate some chiefs of high graduation, such as Uraga who had under his command, in the South of Jalisco, more than 8,000 men. Colonel Raymond Corona became persuaded of the doubtful behaviour of his chief and sundered from his side; afterwards general Arteaga disavows him and declares him a traitor, thus obliging that deserter to flee escorted by two squadrons with which he re-

paired to a place occupied by the enemy. Be it as it may, that army corps demoralised and divided by insidiousness and treachery, the troops dispersing in part through the carelessness of their officers, was reduced to about 4,000 soldiers at the end of the month of June.

The hour of trial was come and the officers who resided prisoners in France were urged to recognise the imperial government of Mexico or to protest they would not fight against the same. Many of them left that exaction unheeded and they were expelled from that country without being granted any resources.

The events of the war were happening successively. For the operations on the North three roads were chosen: from Zacatecas to Chihuahua, passing through Durango; from San Luis to Monterrey passing by Saltillo and from Querétaro to Matamoros passing through Victoria and Linares. The first road was to be pursued with a division by general L'Heriller; the second, with an other division, by Castagny; the third with his own division, by general Mejia. In order to establish a contact between these two latter divisions, colonel Lopez should move with a light column. The two divisions ought to combine upon Monterrey if it were deemed necessary. At the end of July the operation was begun and on the 20th of August, Castagny who occupied the centre and gave the flank divisions the measure for their advance, arrived at Saltillo.

On August 15th, before the advancing enemy, having previously issued the decree giving notice thereof, the constitutional government left Monterrey at three o'clock in the afternoon according to the statement of the decree.

Colonel Quiroga disowned the President in the moments of his departure and attacked his short escort with some cavalry.

Gonzalez Ortega, having retired from Saltillo with 1,500 men joined the President. When the expeditionists arrived at the territory of Durango, Patoni incorporated his small division with them; the President being now safe to retire to Chihuahua, those two generals march upon the capital of the State of Durango finding it occupied by general L'Heriller. Meanwhile Castagny arrived at Monterrey and Mejia possessed himself of Matamoros.

On September 21st Patoni's and Gonzalez Ortega's forces were stationing at a spot called Majoma after the name of a hill near by and there they are attacked by a French column under the command of colonel Martin. This column arrives in front of the battle line and attacks the hill this being the key of the position; the Mexican artillery opens the fire and at the first discharges the French colonel is killed and succeeded by major Japy who continues advancing and takes the hill, seizing a part of the artillery. Then the liberal forces retire in order protected by their cavalry and during the night, without being harassed, disband in a lamentable fashion. They had not been fed during two days and when the night came on and there were no victuals to be distributed, they broke their files and dispersed.

Carvajal and Quesada conserved their troops keeping aloof from the current of the disbanded. These chiefs, disposing of horsemen who reached inhabited villages, had obtained some scanty provisions for their subordinates.

The Government, learning this disaster, took the road to Chihuahua through the desert, with an escort of about 200 men, and arrived there on October 12th.

Corona and Rosales, in Sinaloa, struggled with difficulties to maintain their troops with which they had to fight a strong French expedition advancing towards Mazatlan combined with 5,000 men of Lozada's and a squadron by sea. Corona managed a system of guerrillas to keep up the war in the South of Sinaloa and Rosales marched to the Northern part of that State. This chief, with less forces than the enemy, routed in the open field, on December 22nd, at San Pedro, 500 men who had landed at the port of Altata, killing 26 and taking 207 prisoners, 87 of whom were Frenchmen. The leader of the expedition, colonel Gazielle, was among the latter.

Mazatlan had been occupied; Lozada, then, returned to Tepic and the French remaining at Mazatlan, had not a single day without being harassed by Corona's forces. With the French there remained at the port 500 men of Lozada's.

Arteaga, pursued in the South of Jalisco by the forces of generals Douay and Marquez, suffers a defeat at Chiflon; takes the road to Michoacan and routed at Jiquilpan, goes with the remainder of his forces to join Régules and Riva Palacio who sustained the war in the South and East of Morelia.

General Diaz, in the State of Oaxaca, threatened the enemy's forces both of Puebla and of Veracruz.

Thus the year 1864 was approaching its end. A brigade of 4,000 French had reembarked and two more ought to do so, according to the convention between Napoleon and Maximilian.

In the conditions obtaining then in the country, some irregular forces commanded by improvised chiefs who owed their position to their mere personal valour, not having any superior to be respected, plundered with the pretext they were obliged to live on the requisitions they made and became an actual



Modern establishments. — National artillery foundry. Turning work-shop

plague for the defenceless villages and an ignominy for the cause they feigned to defend. Parties of that kind existed everywhere where there was no representative leader able to enforce order; and the villages of Tamaulipas, Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes and other States had to suffer their depredations.

As for the republican forces subjected to discipline they met with a decided support in the districts where they operated.

Corona learning a French column is coming from Durango leaves some guerrillas at the environs of Mazatlan and rushes with a few hundred men to the mountain range where he bravely although unsuccessfully defends the passage of Espinazo del Diablo, on January 1st 1865.

Behind the mentioned first column there came a second with general Castagny and at the rear a transport of treasury with its respective convoy. That convoy is attacked on the 10th, at Veranos, by the forces that had disputed the passage of Espinazo del Diablo and defeated, 47 French soldiers and 40 armed muleteers being taken prisoners and all of them ordered to be executed.

Once more Lozada was asked for help by the French garrison of Mazatlan and desolating inroads were made, arson and other crimes being the companions of the French-Lozada columns.

Castagny embarked at Mazatlan with 1,000 men and steered to Guaymas whence he afterwards returned to his starting point.

The main nucleus of the Republican combatants had gathered in the State of Oaxaca under the command of general Porphyrius Diaz who had fortified himself in the capital of that State when he saw that numerous troops with artillery trains and led by marshal Bazaine himself, advanced against him. Diaz had fought day by day worrying the enemy, but at last had exhausted his troops, there remaining only his constant followers round him. Nevertheless, his spirit never decayed and he attempted his last resistance in the town of Oaxaca which Bazaine began to besiege on January 17th, concluding this operation and the approach works twenty four days later, daily combats succeeding one another. On February 9th, general Diaz considering further resistance impossible and a general assault preparing, mounted on horseback and accompanied by two colonels, rode undauntedly up to the enemy's head-quarters where he told Bazaine his subordinates had, up to that day, only done their duty obeying him and therefore he was the only one responsible for the resistance and so he surrendered himself without conditions; the place, he added, would no more be defended and it was useless to bombard the same.

So that leader and his forces were taken prisoners.

In the first third of 1865 marshal Bazaine counted on an army of 63,800 men in spite of the reembarkment of a brigade. That army consisted of 28,000 Frenchmen, 20,000 Mexicans, 8,500 rural guards, 6,000 Austrian and 1,300 Belgian volunteers.

Maximilian was intelligent of the fact the number of French troops would be diminished and yet he did not care to organise his Mexican army that after all was to be his support.

In those months of 1865 general Escobedo and colonels Treviño and Naranjo made their appearance in Nuevo Leon and Coahuila raising forces, performing bold operations and surprising the enemy by sudden attacks, while general Negrete with a division occupied Saltillo whence he took the way to Chihuahua.

The North-American Republic was about to finish her civil war and both Napoleon and Maximilian who had tried to get the Mexican empire acknowledged by her, had only elicited the declaration that the United States reputed as legitimate authority in Mexico only that represented by President Juarez. Behind this there was the menace of the immense army remaining under the arms at the close of that gigantic struggle of the Anglo-Saxon people, a people whose influence in America Napoleon had pretended to annihilate by his attempt at establishing on this continent an empire dependent on France.

The diplomatic notes between the emperor of the French and the Washington cabinet, took a more and more hostile form; and Bazaine, in July, went so far as to place his forces in conditions to avoid any collision at the frontier of the United States and to defend himself in the interior of the country.

At any rate it was a matter of importance to make an end of the nucleus of legitimate resistance represented by Juarez in Mexico and so French troops were sent to Chihuahua whence the constitutional President crossing one desert after another, retreats to Paso del Norte. In such a state of things, Maximilian issued, on October 3rd, a terrible decree declaring the defenders of Mexico bandits in order they might be shot at the moment of being apprehended, without any more procedure than the identification of their persons. In conformity with that barbarous law, on the 21st of the said month, at Uruapan, order is given to shoot the patriots generals Arteaga and Salazar and the colonels Villagomez, Diaz Paracho and Perez Milicua taken prisoners by the traitor general Raymond Mendez when he defeated them on his way to Tancitaro. Yet this was no motive for reprisals and Riva Palacio adjusted with the French chief the exchange of 189 Belgian soldiers and officers.

The diplomatic question between the United States and France ended meanwhile, by Napoleon's promise, at the beginning of the year 1866, to withdraw his troops from Mexico.

On the bloody field of arms where war displayed its pennants, the republicans who had consummated so many sacrifices, won some triumphs they well deserved for their perseverance and valour.

Corona, at the beginning of the year 1866, illustrated his campaigns by his actions at Palos Prietos and El Presidio; Chihuahua, abandoned by the French and garrisoned by traitors, suffers the defeat consummated by general Terrazas; Garcia de la Cadena raises once more the standard of insurrection in Zacatecas; Viesca vanquishes the imperialist troops at Parras and accordant with colonel Jerome Treviño performs the action of Santa Isabel against a French column that leaves 79 prisoners in power of the vanquishers. Moved by this defeat at Santa Isabel marshal Bazaine disposed that isolated expeditions should be made only with Mexican troops.

The French emperor gave Bazaine orders to leave in Mexico, after his departure, a number of French soldiers with the character of volunteers, who were to be joined by Belgians and Austrians, thus remain-



Modern buildings.—Chapultepec. Façade of the Military College and array of pupils in parade

ning at Maximilian's disposal an army of 50,000 men. To that purpose they reckoned 8,000 footmen and 2,000 horse of permanent Mexican troops; 27,000 men of auxiliaries among which Lozada's bands were counted; 8,000 men of the foreign legion and 5,000 volunteers that would come from Europe. That army should be endowed with 662 heavy and light guns.

Maximilian was not the man to amalgamate such heterogeneous military elements that must needs get dissolved in his hands. Besides, those 27,000 men of auxiliary troops, exactly counted, would become reduced to 12,000.

On the other hand, the American government gave its minister at Vienna orders to break off his relations with the Austrian government if the volunteers that had gathered to be transported to Mexico were allowed to embark; this obliged the emperor of Austria who happened to have some difficulties with Prussia and could not afford to complicate himself in new ones, to prohibit the embarkment of the volunteers under the date of May 6th.

President Juarez distributed the main commands, bestowing that of the Eastern States on general

Díaz, that of the Northern States on general Escobedo, that of the central army on general Régules and that of the Western States on general Corona.

Ángel Martínez had defeated the imperialists in the capital of Sonora.

General Escobedo, amid hostile forces in movement prepares to attack a convoy coming from Matamoros. A French troop going to meet that convoy is detained by a column of 600 horse placed in front of it near Cerrálvo. Escobedo himself, advancing with 2,000 men, hides on the ridges of Santa Gertrudis and on June 15th, after a guerrilla firing continued since the day before, combat is engaged between the forces of the convoy commanded by general Olvera, and Escobedo's, the encounter being a rude one, for the enemy defended himself valorously. The republican infantry at last took to the bayonet while their cavalry on the flank made a violent charge and triumph crowned the efforts of Escobedo's troops. Olvera hardly could escape with about a hundred horse and Treviño who acted as Escobedo's second chief, had him pursued. This victory cost the republicans 158 dead and 78 wounded while the Austro-Mexicans had 396 dead, 251 being Mexicans and 145 Austrians, and lost 1,001 prisoners, of whom 858 were Mexicans and 143 Austrians, there being 166 wounded among those prisoners. Besides, the goods convoyed remained in the hands of the republicans who delivered the private persons the part they reclaimed and paid double duties for, while the remainder was distributed as booty among the forces of New Leon and of Tamaulipas.

Mejía, with his small force at Matamoros, was obliged to adjust a capitulation on June 23rd, leaving there 43 guns and transporting his men to Veracruz.

For emperor Maximilian the news of the events at the North were a cause of great anguish.

Napoleon was under the obligation to leave in Mexico, until 1868, the foreign legion composed of 8,000 men and a secret treaty bound him to help with 12,000 French soldiers during some months more, after the general withdrawal of the army about to be effectuated; but when those obligations were contracted, no account was taken of the urgings of the United States that after the extinction of their civil war disposed of 400,000 soldiers. Thus, then, of those 20,000 men Maximilian forged himself the illusion he might dispose of for a short time longer, only 3,000 volunteers would be left him. The Mexican emperor finding himself in such conditions and without cash to face the expenses that lay crushing on him, ought to feel inclined to resign the crown by his own will, as was also the drift of the more or less indirect insinuation of his ally the emperor of the French. He thought, indeed, of resigning, but his situation was difficult and he chose to remain in Mexico, surrendering himself to the conservative party he had little sympathy for.

Bazaine, meanwhile, had marched into the interior States, since June, in order to abbreviate the concentration of his troops. The French abandoned the remote places and gradually and systematically were retreating towards Mexico.

On June 17th, Juárez with his government regressed to Chihuahua, to retrocede never more.

On August 15th the imperial government named an ultra-conservative cabinet presided over by Theodosius Lares and this soon began to procure his program of reaction should be realised.

In Sinaloa there remained in the power of the French, in September 1866, only Mazatlán with a garrison of 2,000 men, 500 of whom were of Lozada's bands. On the 12th the advanced fort of Palos Prietos was snatched from them. Of Sonora Ángel Martínez and Pesqueira became masters after defeating successively two imperialist columns; in Michoacán the war was sustained and it was kindled in Jalisco; Guerrero, with the exception of the port of Acapulco, was in the hands of Alvarez; García de la Cadena was occupying important parts of Zacatecas; and general Díaz, having recovered his freedom by a bold escape out of his captivity, had contrived to organise a brigade in Oaxaca and with it performed threatening operations, being seconded by generals Félix Díaz, his brother, and Figueroa, who with their guerrillas harassed the Austrian detachments. As for the forces of the North we have already spoken of their triumphs.

Bazaine who reckoned Maximilian would abdicate and so permit him to negotiate with the govern-

ment that would remain in Mexico some arrangement about the acknowledgment of the French debt, for such instructions were given him at the last hour, felt vexed when he became acquainted with Maximilian's definitive resolution to remain in the country and sustain himself with the elements the conservatives offered him. And so he withdrew all help and even caused the foreign soldiers who had enlisted in the emperor's service to leave their flags.

Marquez and Miramon who had been sent abroad landed at Veracruz and soon obtained places near Maximilian; they were to be his lieutenants in the tremendous war he was going to sustain; in a proclamation dated December 1st he explained to the nation he was resolved to remain on his post until the last moment. The die was cast. Maximilian like Caesar, had passed the Rubicon; but he did not do so at the head of a victory-wont army and sword in hand to impose the enemy his will. The brilliant cavalier of a European court, fond of sciences and arts, full of delicacies and vacillations, a fatalist and a dreamer, he was not the man able to conquer an empire by himself, in a land stirred up by fifty years of bloody struggles; and when 40,000 French soldiers had not been able to occupy in peace even a sole State of the Republic, it was hardly possible for that ill-fated prince to devote himself to the rude task of military organisation, to the fatigues of the campaigns and the hardships of a war between mountains and deserts, in order to strengthen his tottering throne.

On December 3rd, the imperial government had disposed that besides the existing forces three corps should be formed, respectively commanded by Miramon, Marquez and Mejia. While this was happening, the republican forces advanced and advanced at the rate the French troops were leaving the places they had occupied, garrisoned merely by imperialist soldiers.

General Corona, with the colonels Parra and Guerra, detached a brigade to Jalisco, that made a bold passage fighting several times with Lozada's men in the Tepic canton which they cross and arrive at the South of Jalisco where there were already some republican forces. The said general occupies the port of Mazatlan before the eyes of the French who evacuated it taking to their ships.

But let us see the result of the expedition sent to Jalisco. On the 14th, Parra with whom the parties stirring in that State had incorporated, arrived at Autlan; he achieved partial or general operations, threatening Sayula or Zapotlan and on December 18th, at a spot called La Coronilla, situate near Santa Ana Acatlan, having 800 men, he began to combat the enemy counting 700 soldiers. The combat lasted four hours and was a most eager one, ending with the triumph of the republican arms; the enemy lost 372 prisoners, 101 of whom were French, two howitzers of 12 and all his park and armament; on the battle field 150 dead were found; only 15 of them were Mexicans. Among the French killed there was M. Sayn, the commander of the column.

Colonel Parra occupied the capital of the State of Jalisco without any hindrance, being received with manifestations of enthusiasm. The French-Mexican garrison commanded by Gutierrez Estrada retired as far as Leon fighting on the way with forces of Garcia de la Cadena.

Excepting the canton of Tepic where Lozada held strong so many years, the States of Sonora, Sinaloa and Jalisco were in the power of general Corona's troops.

Important operations were effectuated by general Porphyrius Diaz. After the victory won by his cavalry on September 23rd against the Hungarian troop commanded by count Gants who is killed, general Diaz undertakes certain strategical operations by which he succeeds in fractioning the numerous troops that moved upon him; and on October 3rd he waits for general Oronoz's column composed of 1,000 men of the three arms and offers battle on the hills immediate to Mialuatlan. Twice the enemy charged and twice he was bravely repelled by the republicans; combat becomes general and the forces of both sides advance: general Emmanuel Gonzalez, lieutenant colonel Carbó, Cano and Segura Guzman with the infantry charge at the bayonet; general Ramos with a cavalry column, turns the enemy's position and general Diaz, placing himself at the head of the main force decides the triumph. The imperialists lost their artillery and ammunitions and between killed, wounded and prisoners, suffered the loss of one chief, 20 officers and 420 privates. Among the prisoners there were several Frenchmen: major Testart, 6 officers and 21 soldiers.

General Felix Diaz held Oaxaca in check and upon that town the victorious troops directed their march; but learning that a column of 1,500 men was coming to help the defenders of that place, the general in chief orders the town to be threatened with a small force up to the last hour, while with the main gross, he rushes to encounter the said column and joins Figueroa who, having but scanty troops was in jeopardy to be beaten. On January 18th the encounter took place on the spot called La Carbonera which became famous by that rude and bloody combat in which general Diaz once more routed and crushed the enemy stripping him of his four guns and more than 600 carabines and taking 296 prisoners, Austrians, Poles and Hungarians. The field was materially besewn with the killed and wounded of both sides.

The triumphers regress upon the capital of the State and on the 31st, Oronoz who commanded there, surrenders the town with no other condition than the guarantees for life. Forty pieces of artillery, many fusils and other equipments were the booty seized there after the peripeties of the struggle.

Diaz encouraged the troops of the States of Veracruz and Puebla who obeyed his orders.

We cannot omit to state this general showed himself magnanimous with the prisoners whereas the enemy applied his brutal law of the 3rd of October.

Between Mexico and Veracruz hundreds of parties were fighting ardorously and at last the command of that important line is conferred on general Douay who establishes his head quarters at Puebla rendering safe with competent troops that road of retreat for the French army.

Like an inundation the republican forces were invading the towns of the interior evacuated by the



Modern buildings.—Military College. Cabinet of physics

French troops; the Mexican imperialists were impotent to serve as dikes. Marshal Bazaine had advertised Maximilian, he would not be able to sustain himself, but he did not foresee so quick a downfall.

Serious disagreements arose between that general and the emperor inducing them totally to break off their relations.

Marquez had been named commander in chief in the capital and with his wont activity and energy he set to recruit troops. The other conservative chiefs had not lost their time: Mejia was also organising forces in Querétaro; Miramon had left the capital with a nucleus of colonels, officers and sergeants, likewise in direction to Querétaro, and with that nucleus of 400 men among whom there were many French volunteers he was to form a division. To that purpose it was disposed the rest of the garrison coming from Guadalajara should wait for him in Leon and that Severus del Castillo should make ready to move to San Luis Potosí.

On January 15th 1867, general Castagny, the concentration of the French being ended, entered Mexico with the last corps. Immediately it was ordered, the trains, ambulances and remaining impedimenta

should advance towards Veracruz with their respective escorts and troops should be echeloned in that direction. The 5th of February was the day fixed for the departure of the main column that was to be the last at the head of which Bazaine himself marched with a brilliant staff. At nine o'clock in the morning defile began in front of the Palace whose balconies and windows remained shut.

End of Maximilian's empire.—Restoration of the Republic.—In the same month of January 1867, Corona arrived at Guadalajara, marched upon Colima and ordered a brigade under Marquez de Leon to attack Zamora. The former of these towns capitulates and the latter is taken by sheer force by the same brigade having been joined by forces of general Régules.

In the first days of the same month, general Severus del Castillo was detached by Miramon with 2,000 men in direction of San Luis. Miramon marches upon Leon where general Gutierrez Estrada stood, thence he marched quickly with 1,500 men upon Zacatecas where the government of Juarez had just arrived and on the 27th he took the place.

The imperialist leader thought general Castillo was already upon San Luis and Liceaga who ought to perform a previous operation against Antillon had already incorporated with Castillo in order to be able to attack together the town occupied by general Escobedo. Effectively, the said Liceaga left Guajuato marching towards Silao against Antillon; but this eluded the combat striving to join colonel Rincon and reinforced with these troops he advanced to encounter the enemy who rashly returned to his starting point and, attacked in that town, was vanquished leaving 22 guns, arms and more than 300 prisoners. With the remainder of his force the defeated chief sought shelter at Querétaro with Mejia. This unhappy event gave the explication why Castillo was retained.

From San Luis Escobedo had sent general Treviño with 2,500 men to Zacatecas; but learning this place had been taken by Miramon, rushes against him with 1,000 men more and meeting him at San Jacinto routs him totally on February 1st. The artillery, the equipments and 800 prisoners of whom 103 were French volunteers were seized; on the field there lay 100 dead of the enemy and more than 40 of the republicans. Miramon contrived to escape and succeeded in joining Castillo with a few horse.

In view of these events Maximilian asked his ministers for their opinion about the fashion how the advance of the republicans might be stopped; the cabinet, aided by Marquez and Mejia, persuaded the Emperor to place himself at the head of his troops and to advance operating a concentration at Querétaro. The prince accepted his impossible part of general in chief.

Bazaine was still hoping the archduke would disengage himself from the conservatives and consequently from the Empire, and resolve to leave the country; he therefore slackened the march of his column. At Puebla he stopped five days and there he learnt the rout of Miramon and took it for a ground to write to Maximilian offering him he would leave Castagny to escort him to Veracruz where he would wait for him. Indeed, Maximilian, left by France in Mexico, must be a tormentor for the conscience of the chief of the French expedition; but Bazaine's attempt was fruitless.

On the 11th of March, the last armed Frenchman left Veracruz: the intervention had ended. At those moments the Empire counted only on the main places of Querétaro, Mexico, Puebla and Veracruz; on the conservatives whom the emperor loathed and whom he was allied with by necessity, on some 20,000 men, not including Lozada's, and on most scanty pecuniary resources. The Republic had mastered the country in a few days. The said Lozada had declared himself neutral at the latest hour.

The emperor arrived at the spot of his destination on the 19th. General Raymond Mendez, who had evacuated Michoacan joined him on the 21st.

Notwithstanding the quite serious steps made by the emperor he seemed to sustain a struggle of opposite ideas in his mind where schemes shifted like in a kaleidoscope. To be sure he was asphyxiated by the conservative circle that tightened him more and more every day.

In the very moment when he marched to Querétaro he wrote to general Diaz at Huamantla, seeking his support, offering him the command of the troops in Mexico and Puebla and the deposition of Lares,

Marquez and their fellows; and on the way he ordered father Fisher, the head of his privy council, to answer to Santa Anna with whom he had entered into absurd negotiations hoping to attain by means of that anathematised leader an arrangement of the grave questions of the country.

At Querétaro the disagreement between Miramon and Marquez made itself felt. The latter was named head of the general staff, Miramon of the infantry, Mejia of the cavalry, Ramirez Arellano of the artillery and Mendez of a mixed reserve brigade. There were 8,000 men in the place and general Olvera's forces were expected to arrive.

Mexico was surrounded by guerrillas.

General Corona, with his Western forces and those of the Centre that incorporated with his, was approaching Querétaro and so did general Escobedo with the army of the North. Both leaders met for a conference at Chamacuero on February 28th 1867. Escobedo had been intrusted with the command in chief of all those forces that came in sight of the town where the emperor had repaired, by different roads on the 8th of March. The imperialist troops resolved to come out and beat the approaching enemy by retail; but they never effectuated their scheme.

During the night the roads parting from the hostile town were covered with cavalry and on the following day the general in chief accompanied by Corona who had been named second chief surveyed the besiegers who summed in total 18,000 men whose number was increasing by the troops arriving afterwards. As a first measure two corps were formed, one under the command of the second chief and the other headed by general Treviño. On the 11th the besieging operations were begun, under the fire of the enemy's artillery answered by the guns of the besiegers. On the 14th a reconnoitring of the fortified place was made; on the 16th, general Aurelian Rivera hindered Olvera's column to incorporate with the imperialists causing them to retrocede towards the mountains of Xichú; on the 17th Miramon initiates an attack which he does not carry through; on the 22nd, Marquez, named lieutenant of the Empire, accompanied by Vidaurri, leaves the town clandestinely during the night with 400 horse commanded by Quiroga, deceiving the vigilance of the republicans.

At Mexico where the said chief was going, the garrison was formed by 1,000 Austrians on horseback, 300 Frenchmen, two bodies of shooters and 2,300 Mexicans more. There the approach of general Diaz was feared but then they learned he was attacking Puebla. The lieutenant of the Empire arrived at the capital on March 27th. Was he the bearer of faculties from Maximilian to proceed how he should think best for the interests of the Empire or had he precise orders to draw the military elements from Mexico and hurry with them to succour the place where the emperor was shut up and on the eve to become unable to sustain his situation? There are no documents known to resolve this point and only from the facts we can draw some deductions.

Be this as it may, general Noriega sent word from Puebla that general Diaz kept him in a most grave situation, that two of his generals were wounded, that a major had been killed and that the population was hostile against him. Marquez would either succour Puebla and if triumphant would gather the elements of the Empire and then be able to operate with some chance of success, or he would allow Puebla to be lost and withdrawing from Mexico the forces remaining there in order to lead them to Querétaro he would abandon the capital leaving her to be occupied by any troop of the enemy's. Before that dilemma, his option was for the former alternative.

Maximilian's lieutenant, displaying an amazing activity, increased the forces of the garrison of Mexico in order to leave it in conditions to defend itself and departed, with 3,000 men of the three arms, for Puebla on March 30th.

Marquez' resolution harassed general Diaz who determined to make a desperate assault on the forts and trenches counting on an effective similar to that he was going to attack and which was well covered and in possession of a great number of ordnance. It seemed a folly to undertake such an assault.

Marquez arrived at the Soltepec estate on April 2nd and in the early morning of that day, at three o'clock, the cannon thundered at Puebla, this being the signal for the columns, ready to vanquish or

to die, to rush, arms in hand and at double quick pace, on the batteries that received them with close firing.

General Ignatius M. Escudero describes this deed of arms briskly thus in his *Historical annotations of the military career of general Porphyrius Diaz*: «The chiefs of the columns flung them terrible, indomitable, upon the parapets and fortins. The hundred guns of the besieged received them with so continuous a fire that the incessant detonation of six thousand fusils is scarcely heard... The streets were soon bestrewn with corpses, but this did not detain the columns that arrived shattered and bloodstained at the trenches, but leapt over them killing their defenders. At Belem Rodriguez died, Acuña in Iglesias



Infantry and cavalry troops making an hour's halt (present epoch)

street, Vazquez on Malpica breach, but the columns of their command did not retrocede. Bonilla rushed with the bayonet on the enemy that wanted to detain him by his superior numbers; Figueroa surmounted every obstacle the imperialists opposed him, whilst Dorotheus Leon nearly reached the place and Teran had the bells rung in the first church he occupied. In Siempreviva street the defense was nearly unsurmountable and but for the heroic valour of Charles Pacheco the republicans would have been obliged to retrocede. The young major, amid a shower of bullets and shrapnel, marched at the head of his soldiers dragging them behind himself; he was wounded, but he charged once more, then he received a second wound but would not retire before seeing his soldiers victoriously leap over the ditch and occupy the trench. Lying on a litter Pacheco saluted his force, shouted to the Republic and was carried to the hospital where he suffered the double amputation of an arm and a leg. During more than an hour that horrible butchery was continued and the fire still lasted on a large part of the line, particularly at La Merced taken at the expense of much blood by Alatorre and at El Carmen that resisted still longer. But the town had been occupied at several spots and the first assailants that penetrated into the fortified

precinct, attacked the defending traitors in their back obliging them to give in. At length, at the first peep of dawn, all the columns, decimated by gun and bayonet, grouped around general Diaz who had just given his country, on the ground where the 5th of May 1862 was glaring, the glorious date of April 2nd 1867.»

A part of the garrison retired to the hills of Guadalupe and Loreto where they surrendered themselves a few hours later on.

Marquez was surprised by the news on his march to Guadalupe estate; yet he advanced as far as Notario whence he retroceded on the 6th with the aim of returning to the capital.

The conqueror of Puebla, not allowing his troops to repose after taking the town, established the hospitals, gathered the most abundant war equipments, and advanced on the 4th to meet Marquez; then he learns that this is retiring and he orders general Lalanne to detain him with the 1,800 men of his column although he were obliged to sacrifice that column. That chief fulfils the hard commission he had to perform and in consequence thereof general Diaz overtakes the enemy on the 9th at San Lorenzo farm that extends over the flats of Apam. Both troops take their positions and the artillery makes its salutation, but a rainshower coming down during the afternoon hinders the combat to begin. Meanwhile, general Guadarrama sent from Querétaro with 4,000 horse by general Escobedo to observe Marquez, had put himself into contact with general Diaz and during the night had taken the enemy's flank.

At the dawn of the 10th, Marquez, aware of his difficult situation after the reconnoitring he had ordered to be made in the early morning, retired hoping to deceive his adversary by a feigned movement, but the cavalry pursues and overtakes him at San Cristobal whence the imperial chief, intrusting the command to his lieutenant, hastens to Mexico with a few soldiers. His troops defended themselves in disorder; the Austrian cavalry bravely executed offensive turns, but the rout was becoming complete by the flight of the imperials and the advance of the republicans who were taking prisoners here and there, although the Austrian cavalry did not cease to combat till the last moment.

A distance of twelve leagues they pursued the enemy who lost 17 guns, 1,000 prisoners, 500 dispersed and 300 dead. The remnants of that shattered division entered Mexico in the morning of the 12th. Their chief who had arrived the day before was disposing what was needed for the defence of the place.

On the said day, 12th of April, a part of Guadarrama's cavalry arrived at the town of Guadalupe and on the following day the remainder came on while the forces of general Diaz possessed themselves of Tacubaya extending their lines on the flanks in order to advance upon the capital. On the 14th, the troops of Lalanne and Carvajal incorporate with general Diaz, while the 4,000 horse commanded by Guadarrama, urgently called by Escobedo, set out for Querétaro.

General Diaz had not at his disposal all the elements needed for the besiegement of a large place; but concentrating the guerrillas of the valley of Mexico and of Puebla, calling the garrison of Oaxaca, fetching artillery from Puebla, he was able to a certain extent to gather the materials absolutely necessary for that purpose. He had posted his forces on strategical spots it being impossible to surround closely with them a town whose diameter measures more than a league. Be this as it may, Marquez only once attempted, unsuccessfully, to effectuate a sally. Requisitions of horses, exactions of money, reclamations of the diplomatic corps, daily alarms through the firing to be heard in the outskirts of the town, such was the life at Mexico until the end of the month of April. The garrison numbered about 4,300 more or less demoralised soldiers, Marquez procuring to increase their number by the levies he accomplished.

Before this chief left Querétaro, on the same day, March 22nd, general Miramon with a column of 3,000 men, made a rapid sally by San Juanico farm and seized a train of carts charged with victuals for the republicans and then regressed to the centre of the town.

On the 23rd, general Riva Palacio arrived with 4,000 men and this force served to complete the blockade of Querétaro.

On April 1st Miramon, with 3,500 men, broke at San Sebastian through the line defended by Antillon

arriving to the second line and seizing five pieces of artillery, but he was obliged to retrocede abandoning the conquered pieces, because general Escobedo, with reserves, had made his appearance on the theatre of those events.

On the 11th, the valorous prince of Salm-Salm attempts to come out with a column in order to send Marquez some message from the outskirts of the town; but they oblige him to retrocede. On the 12th by an order of the Emperor, Miramon and Ramirez Arellano produced an information manifesting therein how difficult it was to break the siege; they presented the real picture of a sally attempted with all the arms, telling in substance, such a sally would but be the last and greatest of the disasters.

The archduke desperately wondered why Marquez did not return to Querétaro and pretended to send prince Salm-Salm to oblige him to regress. Ignoring the conditions Marquez found himself in and deprived of the aid of this general he at last firmly believed he had been betrayed by him.

In the early morning of April 27th, general Miramon, in combination with Castillo who was repelled, undertook a bold attack on Cimatario hill; dispersed the Michoacan forces posted there, shocked by the flank on a Jaliscoan brigade commanded by Marquez de Leon, at the Jacal farm, crossed the parallel of the besiegers, seized twenty pieces of artillery and would have pursued his march turning the line if he were not rashly detained by a cavalry column under the command of valiant colonel Doria while Rocha boldly arrived with two battalions, if general Corona did not hold strong with 3,000 men containing them in the retreat they had begun and if behind him, taking the enemy by the flank general Guadarrama had not made his appearance with 1,500 horse. That concurring of efforts obliged the intrepid imperialist chief to turn his back and return to his fortifications after a fight that doubtlessly was the most disastrous and bloodiest of all that occurred during the siege of Querétaro.

On May 1st, Ramirez Arellano advances from San Francisquito and his van vanquishes a detachment; but the general in chief contains it with a small force until general Zepeda arrives with a brigade of Jalisco infantry that charges the enemy with the bayonet and makes him retrocede.

The first days of May had already passed when the Emperor learned Marquez was besieged at Mexico and in a letter he wrote him under the date of the 7th he told him among other things: «The physical and moral state in which our army and the people of Querétaro are living after four and sixty days of a rigorous siege renders the defence of the place impossible for a longer period of time... It is absolutely necessary you give us the news of your coming and of the day your troops will attack the besiegers...» The chief whom that letter was written to, was likewise in a condition to ask for help and not to give any.

At Querétaro, indeed, ammunitions were scanty and victuals diminished to the extreme that horse-flesh was reputed a welcome dish.

On the 14th, by order of the Emperor, Ramirez Arellano and Miramon proposed him a scheme of salvation by means of a desperate sally by night effected by all the forces without heavy artillery and baggage. Mendez requested the measure should be deferred until the night of the 15th for several reasons which he explained and got approved; but in the morning of that day the convent of the Cross, the key of the place had fallen into the hands of the republicans whose troops had taken to their arms since the first hours of the night of the 14th, cavalry being posted on appropriate spots; the artillery played on both sides; the battalions of the first line stood on the parallels and the remainder were formed in columns. General Guadarrama's strong cavalry division was to be seen displayed in front of the Cerro de las Campanas (Bell hill).

Thus they passed that night and in the following morning, as has been stated, the Cross convent was in the power of the besiegers.

Before that the imperialist colonel Michael Lopez had come to speak with the general in chief of the operation army and just amid the forces that occupied the convent, this being the stronghold of the place of Querétaro.

During the space of twenty years people assured Lopez had handed over the spot in question by

treason; afterwards discussions arose about the particular and lastly, after that period of four lustra, general Escobedo, has declared, Maximilian had sent Lopez to his head quarter to offer the entrance through the convent under the conception he should be allowed to leave the country and pity should be exercised on the besieged; his answer being he could not grant the solicited favour and the said convent would be occupied whether it was left free or not. Whatever the truth may have been, it must be considered it was impossible for the place of Querétaro to resist any longer according to what appears through all we have stated.

After the seizure of the convent the troops moved upon the enemy's fortified spots, some of them being still defended weakly; 4,000 horse approached the Cerro de las Campanas on the summit of which hill batteries, battalions and cavalry corps agglomerated in disorder around Maximilian, Mejia and the principal chiefs; the line of defence was abandoned and about six o'clock in the morning the Emperor descended in direction to the republican camp; he presented himself to general Corona who led him before the general in chief of the army of operations to whom he handed his sword surrendering himself as a prisoner, this being the condition of the generals, officers and troops present in the fortified perimeter. The blockade was narrowed up to the enemy's trenches and for the moment only the brigades of Velez and Cervantes entered the place.

Exertions were made to have Maximilian treated with benignity and the European Courts displayed a great interest therein. The United States, too, interceded for the unfortunate prince, even before he was a prisoner and in foresight of this event; but Juarez invariably replied the laws of the Republic must be fulfilled in judging him. The resources of defence of the prisoner and his lieutenants Miramon and Mejia having been exhausted, the terms granted by the law having been amplified and expired, the execution of the death sentence pronounced by the ordinary court-martial cognisant of the cause, was put off until June 19th. Maximilian and Miramon showed themselves valiant in the solemn act and so did stoical general Mejia.

At the foot of the Cerro de las Campanas a division of 1,000 men formed a square on the morning of the 19th of June 1867. At seven o'clock the doomed arrived brought in carriages, took leave from one another and with a firm pace stepped towards the corresponding spot: Maximilian ceded the centre, as the post of honour, to Miramon and placed himself at his right, Mejia remaining at the left. The first named shouted with a sonorous voice to Mexico; the second protested against the note of traitor and stood upright to receive the discharge; and the last looked indifferently around. The corresponding platoons, at a signal, gave fire, the detonations sounded, the flashes of the caps were seen, a little cloud and three bloodstained bodies that fell down never to rise again.

Such was the sad final scene of the funest drama of the Empire in Mexico.

There were still in the power of the imperialists, now without a standard, the town of Mexico besieged by general Diaz and the port of Veracruz harassed by the republicans; in the offings of that port general Santa Anna made his appearance proposing the chiefs they should pronounce in his favour; they answered with the deserved despise. Afterwards he was captured by a captain of the American navy and delivered up to the government.

Regarding the capital, general Diaz, with his admirable activity and perseverance contrived to perfect the siege.

The place of Querétaro having been taken, general Escobedo disposed two divisions commanded by general Corona should go to reinforce general Diaz; however, this chief of the army of the East, sure of success, was unwilling to expose the capital of the Republic to the horrors of an assault and in spite of the succour he had received he limited himself to narrowing the blockade and to affirming it more and more.

On June 18th, general Marquez handed over the command to Tabera and absconded; so did Vidaauri, Ramirez Arellano and others.

The Austrian corps, once they were fully aware of the events happened at Querétaro, wanted to ca-

pitulate by themselves and general Tabera commanding the garrison attempted to do so; but general Diaz only granted an armistice of twenty four hours declaring he would not admits of anything but surrender at discretion. The term having ended, hostilities were begun and after the first discharges the garrison of Mexico surrendered themselves.

It was general Diaz's chance to have the glory to hoist once more the triumphant flag of the Republic that it might wave over the National palace.

On July 15th, Mr. Juarez settled his government at Mexico.

Amid the liberal party itself some questions arose thereafter rendering it necessary to take to the



Troops of infantry and light artillery making an hour's halt (present epoch)

arms in order to settle them; but the institutions have kept intact and the country ruled by them began her transcendental work of progress.

Last period of civil war.—Consolidation of peace.—The troops that had concluded the campaign were reckoned to amount to 65,000 men including the prisoners that were aggregated to them at the last hour; dismissing the exceeding corps, in the states where they were formed, five divisions were left in service with an effective of 26,000 places. The command of the first was entrusted to general Alexander Garcia, that of the second to general Porphyrius Diaz; that of the third to general Marianus Escobedo; that of the fourth to general Raymond Corona and that of the fifth to general James Alvarez. The head of the second division having retired from service, he was supplied by general Ignatius R. Alatorre.

Before the army was reduced, general Corona suggested a campaign should be opened against Lozada who, like an independent power, had declared himself neutral in December 1896; but the President's longing for peace induced him to accept of the proposals of Lozada himself for submission which he effected

remissly and remaining in conditions to rise in arms whenever it would suit his interests. In virtue of all this Tepic was declared a military district and provided with authorities under the compromise of temporising with Lozada.

On July 5th badges of honour were decreed for the defenders of their country against the intervention and the empire.

Juarez initiated a constitutional reform aiming at investing the Executive with greater power and that initiative repelled by the comitia and by Congress, gave rise to an opposition against his government sustained until the death of the illustrious patrician who nevertheless, was constitutionally and with enthusiasm elected President of the Republic and proclaimed such by the Chamber at the end of 1867.

New depurations were becoming necessary to eliminate from our habits the spirit of anarchy and disorder that was not long in manifesting itself.

In Yucatan, Sinaloa and Michoacan rebellions without a political platform were raised and quelled during the year 1868.

In that year the armament of breech-loading and metal cartridge of the Remington system was adopted for the army and in cavalry the lance was substituted with the broadsword. Up to 1875 the corps had not yet completely received the fusil and carabine of the said system.

In 1869 new rebellions occur in Oaxaca and Yucatan ending in the same way as the preceding ones; one of a local character peeps out in San Luis Potosí making itself felt and acquiring a serious aspect in 1870, being then seconded by so important leaders as were Martinez and Larrañaga, and reinforced and spread by Garcia de la Cadena, governor of Zacatecas, who disavows the central government. The rebels form a gross of 6,000 men and general Rocha, after sundry peripeties, vanquishes them at Lo de Ovejo, in the South of Guadalajara where they had repaired. The persecution of the remnants of that routed troops was tiresome.

In the Chamber and in the country, meanwhile, a manifest division into three political circles had been operated: that which surrounded venerated Juarez, that formed with discontented elements by Mr. Lerdo who had been elected president of the Supreme Court and that which gathered round glorious general Diaz.

It would be long to relate the diverse pronunciamientos of general Negrete who was always treated with lenity when he submitted or was taken prisoner his former services being taken into account.

At Tampico the garrison rebels and is subdued on June 11th 1871 by means of a rash assault undertaken by intrepid general Rocha who is rewarded with an ascent for that signalised feat of arms.

President Juarez having been reelected, in the last third of 1871, to continue in office, the oppositionists in the capital pronounce themselves against him and possess themselves of the citadel on October 1st; and there, as at Tampico, general Rocha gallantly dominates the rebels.

On September 27th the governor of New Leon, general Treviño, disowns the government and proclaims general Diaz chief of the revolutionary movements. Other rebellions succeed and oblige the said leader to issue in November a political platform called of La Noria after the place where it was dated.

General Alatorre routed numerous rebel forces at San Mateo Sindihui and general Rocha marching to the interior, met their big nucleus and defeated them at Cerro de la Bufa in the neighbourhood of Zacatecas. After their disaster at La Bufa Treviño and Naranjo retreat to New Leon, fight with Corella near Monterrey at Topo Chico, obtaining at length some vantages in that action.

General Diaz arrived at Chihuahua in July 1872 and there he is surprised by the news of the death of the deserving President of the Republic, Bonedict Juarez, whose permanence in office was the motive of the revolution that from the moment of the illustrious patrician's death lacked the reason for which it was started. In virtue thereof the hostile attitude of the armed oppositors ceased and the president of the Supreme Court of Justice of the nation, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, according to the law, took charge of government and issued an opportune ample amnesty having for its result the complete pacification of the country. Afterwards Mr. Lerdo was elected President and under his administration the rising of bandit Lozada took place, in January 1873.

VOLUME FIRST

-8-1

National army

SHAM WAR EFFECTUATED ON DECEMBER 4th, 1900, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MEXICO
ON ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL FEASTS

The Minister of War and his staff

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The said Lozada raised an army of 12,000 men which he divided into three fractions threatening therewith the States of Zacatecas, Sinaloa and Jalisco; the first was stopped, the second was routed and the third, the most important of them and headed by Lozada himself suffered the same fate in the vicinity of Guadalajara, at La Mojonera where 2,200 soldiers commanded by general Corona beat the enemy numbering 8,000. After these feats a campaign is undertaken against Lozada who seeks shelter in the sierra of Alica, is captured and shot.

Meanwhile, president Lerdo had the Reform laws declared forming part of the Constitution of the Republic and instaurated the Senate in our institutions; but his policy, stationary abroad and restrained in all relating to an amplification of the interior elements, similar in every thing to that observed by Mr. Juarez in the last years of his life, did not satisfy the aspirations for progress of the country and the opinion against him was consolidating.

Deserved general Rocha, in a lamentable moment, attempts a rebellion at Mexico with the government forces under his command, in 1875, and afterwards is sent abroad.

General Fuero in New Leon and Coahuila, and general Ceballos in Jalisco, assume the political authority by decision of Government after certain legal formalities and the reelection of Mr. Lerdo is attempted and realised, the respective endeavours causing so great a discontent that general Díaz raises once more the revolutionary pennant, issuing at Tuxtepec, on the 1st of January 1876, a platform by which he disowns the Government.

That platform found an echo at many places of Oaxaca, Puebla, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Yucatan, Veracruz, New Leon and Tamaulipas, but it was no more the soldiers of the army who executed the risings; their leaders were obliged to create their own elements for war.

It had been noted that general Mejia, minister of War, intended to create a circle of his own and this could not fail to impair the morals of the army. The said minister was substituted in office by general Escobedo.

Several combats had taken place. Alatorre dominated the chief nucleuses in the East; general Fuero had kept up in the North; and in the West, general Tolentino, threatened by the Tepic parties headed by Joseph Maria Alfaro, evacuates that district and is substituted in the command by Carbó who then recovers the abandoned territory.

In August 1876 the second head of the revolution, general Donatus Guerra, was defeated at Tamiapa by lieutenant-colonel Bernard Reyes; he marches to Chihuahua and is captured, dying afterwards at the hands of the force commanded by lieutenant-colonel Machorro that guarded him, while they were attacked by a triple number of the enemy's forces.

Sundry encounters succeeded one another and in November general Alatorre engages in a battle against general Diaz at Tecuac. The former's troops, rather demoralised, were routed through the adversaries firmness and his receiving at the last hour auxiliary forces led by general Gonzalez. After this important victory the head of the revolution made a triumphal march to Puebla, this town being surrendered by the garrison there existing.

We must not go on without stating that the president of the Supreme Court, which office was then held by licentiate Joseph Maria Iglesias, disavowing the lawfulness of Mr. Lerdo's election, addressed a manifesto to the nation declaring himself interim President of the Republic in virtue of the law and repaired to Guanajuato where governor Antillon who counted on 2,500 soldiers of the State, lent him his support.

General Diaz being at Puebla and Antillon proclaiming Iglesias at Guanajuato, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada left the capital on November 20th and embarked at Acapulco for the United States whence he never came back. Four days after the departure of Lerdo, general Diaz at the head of 12,000 men occupied Mexico; and according to the Tuxtepec platform reformed at Paló Blanco, took charge of the executive power; he intrusted therewith general John N. Mendez and marched upon Guanajuato.

When Mr. Lerdo left the country, Mr. Iglesias was recognised by several chiefs of the army and

attempted at coming to an agreement with general Diaz; but his proposals not having been accepted, he fled through Guadalajara where general Ceballos commanded a strong division and embarked at Manzanillo; having arrived at Mazatlan he steered his course to San Francisco de California.

The Government troops having no legal standard owing to the absence of Mr. Lerdo and the premature political evolution of Iglesias, nowhere offered any resistance and so the revolution was victorious throughout the Republic.

After the triumph of general Diaz the country saw no more what may be called a revolution; and the isolate revolts or of a mere local character, were repressed with promptitude.

In order to give his government a constitutional existence, the victorious general issued the convocation for elections of the powers and in virtue thereof the elected Congress met in the month of April and declared him President of the Republic in May 1877 after the previous computation of the respective votes.

In the following year, a change of the manœuvre regulations of the army was effectuated, the extended order being adopted with the application of general Lewall's ternary system.

A serious rising headed by generals Marquez de Leon and Ramirez Terron, in Sinaloa, Sonora and Lower California, was repressed by troops of general Carbó's. Colonel Bernard Reyes with but little force compared with the enemy's, defeated Ramirez Terron at Villa de Union, on July 4th 1880, thus greatly contributing to dominate the revolters. Colonel Reyes who was twice wounded in the combat received in reward of this behaviour two ascents, for he was granted the effective employment of a brigade general.

General Emmanuel Gonzalez having been elected President of the Republic took charge of his post in December of 1880.

During the term of his government the army regulations were reformed.

Something of a conflict arose during that term in Sonora: the governor of that State was disobeyed at Guaymas and Hermosillo and general Reyes conveniently intervened in the question putting an end to the alarms. Another event similar to that in Sonora, happened in Jalisco and general Tolentino cared for the restoring of order.

General elections having been effected in 1884 and the declaration by Congress having been published that general Diaz had been favoured with the public vote, he took charge of the nation's supreme magistrature on 31st of December.

Since 1884 a campaign against the Yaqui and Maya Indians had to be undertaken to obtain their submission; successively, for it was protracted during several years, it was carried through by generals Carbó, Topete, Martinez and Torres.

Several riots for local electoral questions having occurred in Coahuila and New Leon, in the former of these States the state of siege is declared and general Julius M. Cervantes is named provisory governor. Afterwards in 1885 general Bernard Reyes is ordered to march with a brigade from San Luis Potosi to New Leon and is provisorily intrusted with the government of that entity, after some armed movements having taken place that terminated by the measures we have hinted at.

President Diaz was reelected for other consecutive terms.

In August 1893, in Coahuila a rising against the local government for electoral questions is initiated and general Reyes intervenes and causes the oppositionists to deliver him their arms although they already had opened hostilities against the government forces of that State. Canute Neri rises in Guerrero likewise for the question of the elections in that federative entity and submits having been judged by a court-martial.

Public tranquility was no more disturbed by revolts and we have seen how local movements were dominated and peace consolidated.

More than 12,000 kilometers of railways and more than 50,000 of telegraph wire, extended through the country during the last years facilitated communication, abbreviated the marches of the troops and thus contributed to affirm the conquered peace.

The administrative management of general Diaz was amazing, feats worthy of record having been achieved, amongst them that of having abated for ever the monster of anarchy that had lived during a period of sixty years sucking the blood and with it the life forces of the shattered country.

Summing up.—The present army.—We have surveyed history and have seen forming an army, already Mexican, product of conquerors and conquered, in the last years of the viceregal period; we have seen that royalist army fighting against the insurgent crowds called up by the independence shout of Hidalgo, that got disciplined by the organising genius of Morelos and held out, encouraged by Guerrero's heroic constancy, against the said army coming to form with their enemies a whole denominating itself tri-guarant army, at the time when the independence was consummated in 1821.



Artillery troops halting at a stage (present epoch)

Thereafter the sunder of the country into the liberal and the conservative bands ensues and then the permanent army segregates with its old fueros and privileges; it joins the clergy and mainly serves the interests of the latter of those bands taking defection for its device and achieving an uninterrupted series of pronunciamientos kindled in the ambitions, in the passions of the leaders of the troops.

It is with armed citizens the saving liberal evolution of the Ayutla platform triumphs and then a new army remains formed: its soldiers are those who rose inspired by the idea to put an end to tyranny, under the banner of eximious John Alvarez; but Comonfort accepted as a component part of that incipient army the old troops of dictator Santa Anna that soon betrayed him and caused his fall, sustaining the formidable struggle from 1858 to 1860 under the command of Miramon and then with Marquez joined the French invader army, thus turning their arms against their country. Such troops were afterwards the support of Maximilian's empire and were definitively exterminated by them who illustrated themselves in the wars for liberty, for Reform and for the second independence.

When the Republic was restored, the army was reformed in conformity with the dispositions issued

for that purpose. That army was depurated from the vices of the old one that terminated in the combats or was taken prisoner as we saw; it invested a national character and was no longer that rotten privileged class which, like a pretorian guard, with their bloody mutinies caused so many changes of government. Indeed, in September 1867, during the epoch of Juarez government the present army became regulated and then modified by the presidents general Diaz and general Gonzalez.

Lastly, under the presidency of general Diaz, owing to the untiring labour of the minister of war, general Philip B. Berriozabal who has reorganised all things relating to the army and modified ordinances and regulations, the military branch in Mexico finds itself in the terms we are going to explain:

The *Ministry of War and Marine*, to manage the services of its incumbency disposes of: the Minister's superior office, with five boards and a section for Archives and library; a department for the special body of the general Staff in which there are comprised as annexes the transport, communication and stage services; another department of Engineers and those of Artillery, Cavalry, Infantry, Medical Staff and Marine, this last having in charge all matters relating to the Navy.

There is a *General Staff of the army*, with ten generals of division and fifty of brigade who fulfil divers commands and commissions.

The *Superior Board of war* composed of one general of division and four of brigade is occupied in giving an information on any matter brought to its cognisance by the Minister of the department.

The *Governors of the Palaces of the Executive* depend on the military branch.

The *Special Body of the General Staff*, is formed by the technical generals and officers by whom the staffs of the commanding generals are integrated and whose knowledge is turned to account for the fulfilment of other commissions.

The *Corps of Engineers* has in charge the construction of military buildings and fortifications and its dependencies are the *Sappers* that form a battalion; the *Military service of telegraphs and railways* and the *Train* for the conduction of sapping implements, iron instruments, portable bridges, etc.

In all the battalions and regiments that form the army there is a primary military school; besides there are the schools of *Application for Artillery, General Staff and Engineers*, for *Bands*, for *Veterinarians* and *Horseshoeing* and the very important ones of *Army surgeons*, *Naval surgeons*, and a *Military college* where they study Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineering and General Staff. This College furnishes a precious contingent of officers for the army.

The *Artillery corps* is entrusted with the *Arsenal*, the *Military Museum and Library*, the *General Park* with its weapon stores, the *National Foundry of Artillery* and the *Powder manufacture* and besides the battalions of cannoneers.

The *Sanitary Service* is performed by the *Medical* and the *Veterinarian* bodies. Its personnel is distributed over the *Military Medical School*, the twelve *Hospitals*, established with all the necessary elements, in such places where there exist general barracks of the Zone and in the battalions and regiments; for every corporation has a surgeon assigned for their service and every Zone a veterinarian.

The said Medical Body has *sections of tenders and litterbearers* and a *train of ambulances*.

The *Military Administration*, at peace times, consists only of the payers of the corps, giving their accounts to the general Treasury of the Nation; but in times of war, brigade or division payers are named, at whose charge there are *camp bakers* with their *wheeled ovens* and other necessary implements and transport trains.

The *administration of military justice* is composed of a *Court of Justice* with four halls, *Archive section*, *Official Defensorships*, *Public prosecutor* and *Assessors*.

The *Primary courts* are settled in the Head-quarters of the Zone where ten permanent Courts-martial are distributed, in order to take immediate cognisance of the trials to be formed.

The *transport service* maintains one train on peace-footing and others are organised for war-footing according to the rules established for the case.

The army is arranged on the following effective state:

VOLUME FIRST

National army

SHAM WAR EFFECTUATED ON DECEMBER 4th, 1820, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MEXICO,
ON ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL FEASTS

Advance of a cavalry column



The *Artillery* has four *battalions of cannoneers* and one of *galling-guns*. Every battalion, on peace footing has 12 field-guns, 12 mountain-guns and 2 horse-guns with their corresponding carts. Thus these battalions count 104 cannon and 24 gatling-guns. Besides there is a large store of heavy artillery.

The *Cavalry* is composed of fourteen *regiments*, having each of them four *squadrons*; eight *frames of regiments* of two squadrons and three *regional squadrons*, of Lower California, Sonora and Chihuahua and moreover the *army gendarmerie* doing the service of military police.

The *Infantry* consists of the *battalion of sappers*, 28 *battalions of line*, each of four companies, 12 *frames of battalion* of two companies; 2 *regional battalions*, in Yucatan and Tampico and 7 *companies* likewise regional ones, occupying spots on the coast.



Mass of columns defiling by sections (present epoch)

The total of that force is 26,000 men, whose number is increased, for special opportunities, by other auxiliaries. At present they are armed with the Mauser fusil and carabine, Spanish, model, seven millimeter calibre.

In time of peace those troops, distributed over the Republic, according to the dispositions of the War ministry, cover, under the command of division or brigade generals, the garrisons of the eleven *Military zones or Departments*, into which the country is mainly divided; and three commandancies and four chieftaincies wherein there are two prisons and three forts furnished with heavy artillery.

An institution for the care and relief of the maimed or disabled in an action or a campaign in the *Military Asylum for Invalids*, having its corresponding staff of officers and administrators.

There is a *Depot of generals and officers*, a corporation wherein the graduated military persons out of commission are gathered.

There exist four *Recruiting depots* where the contingents are received that every State of the Federacy at the rate of its census furnishes every year to fill up the void caused in the army corps.

The *Reserves of the army* are formed: in the *first* place by the magnificent division of 3,200 men of the rural cavalry corps, dependent on the ministry of the Interior; the fiscal gendarmeries and frontier guards at the disposal of the Finance Minister and that sum more than 1,000 select riders; the mounted and the foot police of each one of the States and the National Guard in active service that exists in those States; in the *second* place by the National Guard in assembly for whom armament is kept in the stores.

To form the staffs of those forces they rely on the Depot of generals and officers and on those of the permanent army sundered from service.

On war-footing the personnel of the permanent army is increased at the rate of thirty three per cent regarding the artillery and infantry and of twenty five per cent in cavalry. Every battery of the artillery battalions receives an increase of two guns. Thus, in such conditions, the Mexican army has: 34,000 soldiers of the permanent army, with 150 cannon and 32 gatling-guns; 26,000 men of the *first reserve* and 100,000 of the *second* with the artillery that may be assigned them; for the store of ordnance pieces being plentiful, any number deemed necessary may be put under service.

The Zone division we have stated is arranged for times of peace; but during war the bodies form brigades, divisions, corps and armies.

The *National Navy* has one corvette, three gun-boats, one transport and one sailer; it is directed by its technical bodies that are busy in naval Engineering and the preparing of floating and fix materiel, medical department, administration, personnel and its recruiting.

At Veracruz there is a self-careening dockyard with store and the corresponding offices; and the port of Guaymas is provided with a dry dock and its respective workshops.

The *Naval Military School* aims at forming the war personnel and the machinists imparting an education both theoretical and practical.

The *Mariners' School* strives to breed the personnel of mariners, firemen and other dependencies of the branch.

Such is the frame wherein the Army and Navy of the Republic present themselves.

The recruiting system for the army is still far from satisfying the aspirations of the Government that asks the States for their contingents and these gather them in an irregular way, causing the military service, as a rule, to bear upon the lowest classes of society.

In this particular gradual reforms are planned which have not yet been undertaken as scarcely four lustra have elapsed since peace became settled in the country under the Presidency of general Porphyrius Diaz; but in the year 1898 it was determined by an act of parliament that *military service* is to be considered *compulsory* and that law is reputed as a step in the evolution that must take place in so important a matter, in benefit of the army and indeed of the whole nation, as at present our army has come to be, as is incumbent on the same, the guardian of the Republic's institutions and autonomy.

Our Navy is an incipient one as it has not been possible to develop it although it is utterly needful for a country that has so immense an extent of shores washed in the East by the Atlantic Ocean and in the West and South by the Pacific.

The steady peace Mexico is owing to general Diaz, the illustrious ruler who now directs her destinies, is a promise that whatever may be wanting to perfect our military institutions, to increase our Navy, will be effectuated.

On the other hand, there will hardly exist in the world any other organised troops that equal the Mexican ones in sobriety and resistance to heavy fatigues; their horsemen possess overmatching aptitudes and all the men that form our troops are endowed with the valour of the races whose offspring they are: a valour that works wonders when it is steadied by the discipline and drilling which the army now eagerly endeavours to secure.

Conclusion.—We have passed through the bitter trials laid on us by the ineludible law of our histo-

rical antecedents, of the atavisms of the races whose resultant we are, of the ebullition of hostile bloods that mingled with their hatreds and their opposite energies; and at length, depurated by the fire of all the torments in the crucible of tremendous struggles making us suffer martyrdom, we can show ourselves before the world with an army that, sacrificing itself, forming itself amid the slaughter, has contrived to save the independence and liberty of our country fearfully threatened during a doleful period of sixty years of constant wars.

Behold, now, this Mexican army, with its 26,000 soldiers in times of peace, its 160,000 soldiers in the case of war, having the history we have traced, duty for its norm of behaviour and honour for its religion.

In order to ascertain how this army has been forming, we have assisted at the great epopee of the Republic and have seen its heroes struggling, gloriously ascending towards the luminous region of the immortals.

Lo, what a picture we have presented! There is the sketch of a field with its wild shrubs, its frondose wood, its mountains and savage torrents; the arrow-shooting huntsman there, is the warrior that disputes the bloodstained prey and raises the spear with a nervous push and thrusts it into the breast of his oppositor.

There appears the tribe, armed with lance and bow, defending a field where they caused to shoot up the noble plant that offers the so much looked for food; you perceive the embryonary town that prepares to fight for its quiet, that eagerly works for its welfare and that is troubled by the bold host greedy of booty. We behold the nation, the race, that gathers its contingents, that forms the warrior phalanxes defending the land where it spreads and sustains itself, the land where its life develops, or rushing on to widen their frontiers, to seek new countries for their activity.

That race is the Aztec race and it is seen settling in Anahuac, on a valley covered with lakes and woods; it is seen fighting with its neighbours and organising an amazing army; but extraordinary men covered with iron, invulnerable for the weapons of the aborigines and who dispose of the fire and the lightning (arquebuse and cannon) make their appearance by the East, allied with their innumerable and formerly conquered enemies and drown their warriors in their blood and submit the subdued people to a long captivity.

Out of the mingling of the conquerors with the captives there arises a new and ardent folk that at length ejects the new comers who, always elated, wanted to keep up their dominion, tiring them, overcoming them in a bloody protracted war; and then a heterogeneous nationality is formed, the Mexican nationality, of distinct origins and aspirations, of different illustration; and afterward that nation is a field of anarchy: during sixty years its territory is shaken by fight and struggle against enemies from within and from abroad. How much blood and vitality was needed to support the terrible constant hecatombs!

What an epoch that of our wars! The battalions that fight and their bloodstained rests that are vanquished or that triumph; the squadrons rushing along in their vertiginous charge, that fall shattered; the cannon that thunder and lighten sinistrously, the standards waving, running like kindling flames, alike over the friends' and the enemies' fields; blood streaming troops looking at each other amid fire and smoke; glare of arms, clash of bronze, sounds of horns and drums, waving of conquering or conquered banners: such was the apocalyptic picture of our intestine struggles.

And thus dilacerated by the same we are overwhelmed by the Anglo-Saxon invasion; and then, later on, the Gaul comes to our bloody feast; but nothing can exhaust us; old-fashioned institutions fall down, heads with crowns roll on the ground and at last, after so much suffering, after so much fighting, our Republic rises glorious; sustained by our army the national Mexican banner is lifted toward the sky.

While History in its gigantic faithful mirror reflects to our eyes the perspective of by-gone times, the vertigo of the infinite invades us, we feel a desire for great actions, and emotion, electrifying our nerves, dims our eyes and presses our hearts.

Bernard Reyes.

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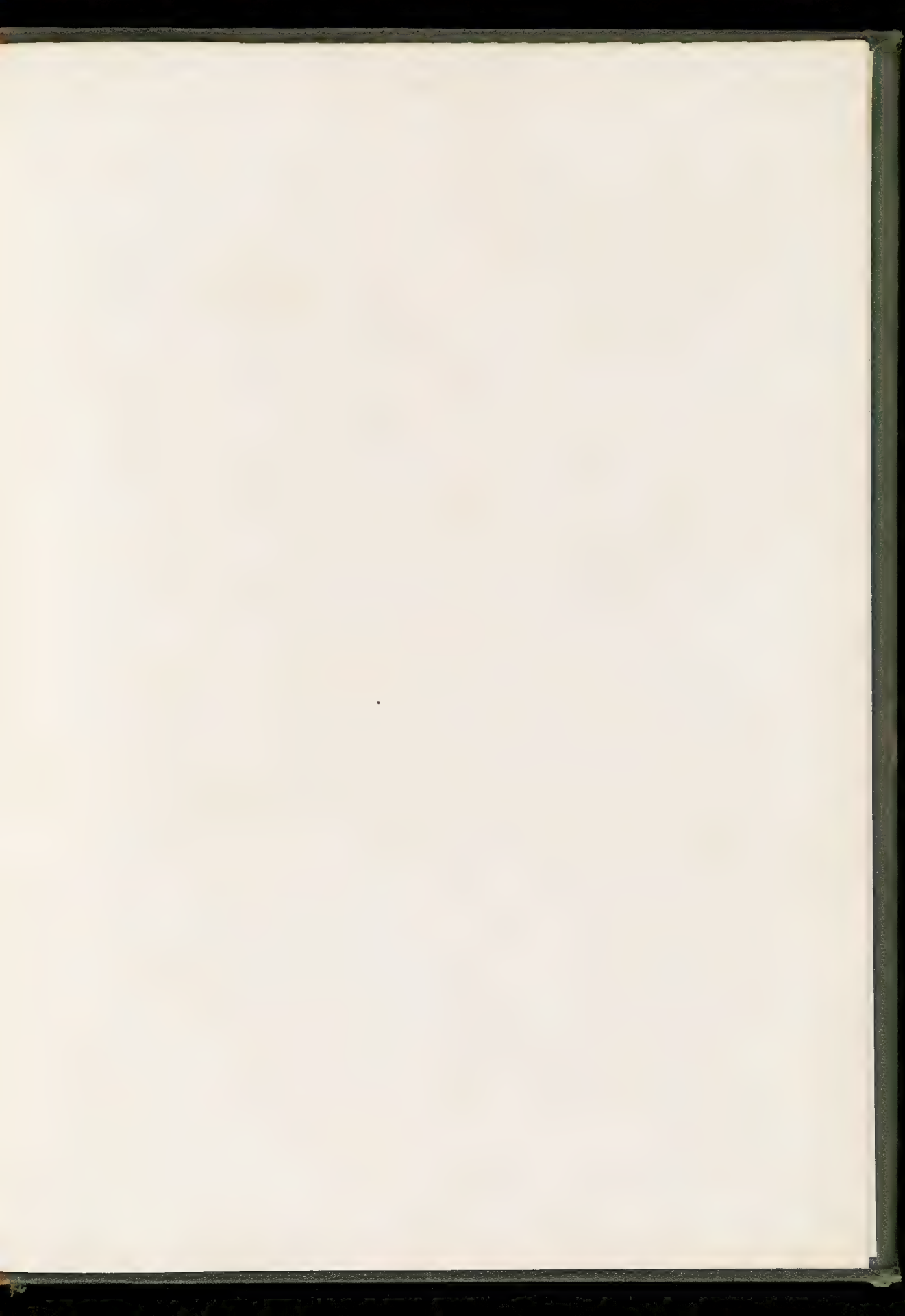
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